

TAKE COURAGE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR:

SLEEP IN PEACE

FREEDOM, FAREWELL!

THE SPINNER OF THE YEARS

THE PARTNERSHIP

CARR

TRIO

INHERITANCE

A MODERN TRAGEDY

THE WHOLE OF THE STORY

TAKE COURAGE

by

PHYLLIS BENTLEY

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1940

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ALL THE CHARACTERS in this novel are real people, revived from the pages of Yorkshire history to enact again their significant drama of love and strife, human strength and human weakness. If I have sometimes deepened the lines, and supplied the gaps, of this story of England's Civil War, from my own invention, that is the novelist's privilege: to create a symbolic unity from scattered hints and dispersed incidents.

PHYLLIS BENTLEY

Halifax

March, 1938–October, 1939

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PENNINAH REMEMBERS

I HAVE BEEN YOUNG, and am now old. I have lived in times very troublous and perplexed; times of rebellion, of civil war, of plague and famine, siege and battle, bewilderment and waste; times when brother raised his hand against brother, and those of my own household were divided against themselves. I have seen men so persecuted and hemmed about that they could abide it no longer, but rose up in arms to defend their just liberties against the oppressor; I have seen those same men deny those same liberties in their turn, till they too were cut down as an offence in the sight of God. I have heard the great cannon thunder over Bradford, and the screams of the women echo in the Bradford streets as the soldiers sacked the town; I have known those same streets quick with peaceful business, the hoofs of the packhorses clattering in the market; I have known them silent, in ruin and decay. I have felt a bitterness as of death when my dear love was struck down in the prime of his youth; I have trembled at the tramp of armed men in my husband's house by night, while he was fleeing over the moors. I have loved; I have sinned, I have repented; I have borne children and seen the dearest vanish forever beyond a far horizon; I have known both the wrath and the singular mercies of God.

Now I sit here, in the latter part of my age, at the door of my son's house, and think on all these things. My memory plays me strange tricks since I am grown old; I cannot call to mind what was written in the letters that came yesterday from the New World, or where my son is to preach to-morrow, but I remember very well all the long chequered story of the past; I can see as if it were now before my eyes the day when it all began for me, the day when I first met John and Francis.

I
PEACE

THE CLARKSONS LOVE LEARNING

IT WAS A Lord's Day in June, in 1625, the year when Charles I came to the throne; and I remember how in church that morning I was divided in mind between a wish that Mr. Okell should finish his sermon quickly and let us all out into the sweet sunshine, and a reluctance towards the visit at Little Holroyd which would follow the morning's service. For myself I was well content to listen to Mr. Okell's exhortation, which was a learned discourse on the sacraments from a text in Corinthians, for we Clarksons have always been fond of our book and eager to learn new things; but David, my little brother, my dear charge since our mother's death at his birth four years before, was growing drowsy beneath the heat and the length of the vicar's peroration. His blue eyes blinked and closed, his hot little fingers softened in my grasp, his fair head fell forward on his plump chest, he was asleep. William frowned and shook his arm; David started awake and looked about him, and his smooth cheeks flushed with the shame of finding himself misbehaving in church. But soon his sleepy little head nodded again, so Will, colouring and looking cross, took the child gently in his lap.

To look cross and act gently was like my elder brother Will, with his long glum face and lank loose-jointed body; I never could determine whether it was his big skew nose or his large pursed mouth or his crooked bushy eyebrows or the rough brown hair hanging unevenly on his bony shoulders which gave him that harassed and perplexed but warm and obstinate air. I was uneasy as I looked at him that day; what make of a girl was this Elizabeth Thorpc, I wondered, who had so bewitched our homely

Will? Would she prove a good wife for a minister of religion, which dear William had firmly set himself to be? The Thorpes were rich; Thorpes of The Breck at Little Holroyd had been master clothiers for generations past, and owned many closes of land besides. Would they be content to give their daughter to a yeoman's son? My father, Robert Clarkson, was a good scholar, a churchwarden of Bradford Church, an upright and honest man, and a master clothier too; but though I was then only a child of eleven years old, I knew already, as children do, that others could always over-reach my dear father when it came to trade, and trade has ever been thought much of in Bradford town. I loved my father so well that I often knew what was in his mind though I did not altogether understand it. I knew, when the widow Lister asked him to take her son as apprentice and he denied her and sent her to Mr. Thorpe, that the denial was a grief to him, though I did not know why; I knew, when a month ago I saw him standing with Mr. Thorpe by the loom in the upper chamber in our house in Fairgap, where Joshua Lister used to work, that it was more than a fault in the unfinished cloth that made my father look so sad; I knew, when Will told us, in his rapid jerky speech, of his affection for this Mistress Elizabeth, that my father for some reason was troubled by Will's choice. So I was loth to dine at Holroyd Hall, for my father's sake, and uneasy at the outcome of the visit, for Will's. Some children would have been eager to see a new place and strange folk, but I had lived so close at home, always about my father, that I was shy.

The sermon was over now and the Grammar School boys sang, and my father and Mr. Thorpe walked into the vestry before the Vicar, carrying their churchwarden's wands. My father at that time was of very tall stature, with his hair a silvery grey and his face somewhat hollowed; indeed he was excessively thin in all parts of his person, persisting, in spite of all our good Sarah urged on him, in a very spare diet. Then, as always, he was very gentle; indeed his grey eyes, though they had a lively sparkle,

were the gentlest, kindest eyes, I think, that looked out of any man's head. He was apt to slip a little in his speech, especially when, as often happened, he had some merry quip or scholarly moral he wanted to tell the company, but his language was always neat and well-chosen; indeed he used finer and better words than any man in Bradford save Mr. Okell. Walk beside him now, Mr. Thorpe, with his blunt, high-cold face and his twinkling little eyes, looked very square and short and dark, and not nearly so fine a gentleman my father, for all his wealth.

As soon as we were out of church, W throwing a jerked excuse over his shoulder, pushed through the crowd, towards Mistress Elizabeth, as I stood; David and I stood back by one of the graves to wait for father. Many halted to greet us as they pass, the women stooping to pat David's fair curls and cooing smile with baby talk. David was ever of a sweet and friendly disposition, and though he sometimes held tightly to my hand and his eyes widened in dismay if a lady begging a kiss were old or ill-favoured, he did not start or turn aside as some children do, but obediently offered them his soft round cheek. But the congregation had abated by, and still my father did not come, and it grew lonely standing there on the hillside, watching the fathgales and tall hats grow less as the families descended the slope and crossed the beck by the Broad Stones and went hence up Kirkgate to dine. David's hand trembled in mine, and his lip drooped, and suddenly he wailed out that he wanted his father, he wanted his father; poor little lad, he cried so bitterly the tears stood on his cheeks like marbles, and I was hard put to it to comfort him, for I wanted father too. I felt lonely, deserted, and somehow guilty, as if there was something wrong in our being there by ourselves; but though David begged to go home, I would not stir, I knew we must wait where father had bidden us.

Suddenly all the Grammar School boys came rushing out of the church, leaping and shouting and pushing each

other iij; they did not mean to be rough, but David cried of fear and buried his face in my skirts, and as I bent ov^{er} him and put my arms around him to comfort him, th^{ere}s stood thick in my eyes too.

Then of the bigger boys turned and came back; the othe^r play struck at him and jeered, but he took no heed them, not striving to avoid their blows by running, coming soberly on. He halted beside the grave-stones and stood squarely before us, his feet rather straddled, his face vset.

"If you'l walk with me, Mistress Penninah," he said gruffly, "I'l bring you safe to Little Holroyd." He added, seeing, I ect, that I did not quite know what to make of him: "In John Thorpe, at your service."

He was awkward-looking lad four or five years older than mysellot tall, but very thickset for his age, with broad shoul^{ders} and long arms. In feature he was plain, and in comxion dark. At that time I did not fancy dark-comple^{xed} folk, having dark hair myself, so John Thorpe hadothing handsome about him in my eyes, and it strucke as unmannerly that he kept his hat on his head while haddressed me. His voice too was harsh and untuneful, an^d his words had a homely sound about them, not like my faer's. But he spoke with so much honesty and kindness tt I knew at once he was to be trusted, and held him as a iend.

"My father ade me wait," I began timidly.

"Here he is ow, with mine," said John. He jerked his head towards t^{he} east end of the church; and there sure enough came my father, walking slowly, his head bent, in deep talk wit Mr. Thorpe. When they saw us, the two men waved us foward and my father called: "Pen, go with John."

John took Daid's other hand, and we walked down Church Bank and along the water-meadows by the willows, then through the Turls, where the rooks calling in the trees seemed to mimic the men who lounged and laughed and shouted below, waiting already for the afternoon's

cock-fighting. I hurried David's step, for I hated to see the sport, so bloody and fierce and cruel; John without speaking quickened his gait too. Soon we had left the Green behind, and were climbing quietly up the steep lane towards Little Holroyd. David had now ceased crying, and seemed content to walk soberly between us, humming a little as he went. There had been rain the night before, and water still lay underfoot in some of the ruts and hollows beneath the trees. Presently we came to a pool stretching right across our path. David halted, and looked up at me with a pleading mischief in his eye. John, who was walking with head bent, seemingly much preoccupied, did not observe what was going on, and looked up in astonishment when he felt the drag on his arm. He stood still—in the middle of the pool, as it chanced, poor John!—and turned an enquiring gaze on me.

"He wants to be swung over the water," I said, for father and I, and sometimes even Will when he remembered, would pleasure the child in this way on our walks.

John's stern face relaxed into a wintry smile.

"Jump then, David," he said kindly.

He gave David his right hand, put his left beneath the child's elbow, and swung him through the air with such a will that David shouted with pleasure. He ran on ahead to seek more pools, and would have us jump him over every patch of water he found. John seemed content to humour him; it was a simple pastime but a harmless, and pleasant enough; we reached Little Holroyd hot and a trifle out of breath, but good friends, with our fathers close on our heels.

THE THORPES ARE CLOTHIERS

Mrs. THORPE CAME to the door of the Breck to welcome us. At that time she was a large dark powerful woman, with an implacable air; she always dressed in very neat dark gowns, of rich materials but old-fashioned in cut; her features were heavy and plain, like John's, and she had a mole by one eyebrow which I could see frightened David. She eyed me grimly, greeted me with the false effusion some people keep for children, put her face down to mine but did not kiss me. But neither can I give my kisses easily; so we touched cheeks without embrace. This surprised her a little, I think, though indeed I could not help it; she gave me a shrewd glance and a grim half-smile, and invited me into the house with a plainer but warmer manner. We respected each other for our awkward honesty from that moment, though there was never real affection between us, or full ease. I felt that if her daughter Elizabeth took after her, Will's way through life would be firm and straight, very reputable and honest though perhaps rather lacking in joy.

But Elizabeth did not resemble her mother, as I found when we were all seated at table in the house; true, she had Mrs. Thorpe's black hair and heavy frame, but her look was peevish and sickly, and in spirit she was like her father, that is, of easier, less lofty tone. Indeed at times I have found a certain humorous pity for Mr. Thorpe, compressed by the uncompromising honesty of his wife and son into a straiter and narrower way than he would himself have chosen. That day, for instance, he made jokes about Elizabeth and Will, and paid me compliments on what he was pleased to call my broad white forehead and

grave grey eyes, saying that my father would not be able to keep Penninah long at home, and so on. Elizabeth tittered, Will threw himself about on the bench, I held my head high and tried to smile though my cheek burned, finding his intention kind though the joke was unpleasing, and my father with an easy transition led the talk away from him to the morning's sermon; but his wife and son scowled so at poor Mr. Thorpe that he grew abashed, muttered and mumbled and finally dropped quiet. But it was not in his nature to stay down for long, and whenever the talk touched business he spoke up shrewdly.

The house-body of The Breck, where we sat at meat, was very well kept and furnished. The quarries in the mullioned windows, and the flagged floor, had been well washed, and the great oak table and benches, the armchairs and buffets, were polished and gleaming. Not a speck of dust lingered in any cranny of the big panelled court cupboard, or in the carved rims of the table trenchers. All the copper pans and the broiling irons by the hearth, and the brass fittings of the fowling-piece hanging over the chimney-breast, shone bright in the firelight. I could see that Mrs. Thorpe must be a notable housewife, and I thought that her serving-maid and the apprentice, Joseph Lister, who helped to pass the meat before sitting to table, might find her an exacting one. Lister, a scrubby simple-looking boy enough, with a flat face full of freckles, a grinning mouth, and coarse hair the colour of rust falling into his eyes, was placed on David's other side; at first I did not like him being so close, for though he doubtless meant no harm he fixed such an impish stare on me as disconcerted me, he seemed to be watching every mouthful I ate. But soon I had cause to thank him for his kind demeanour to David; he helped the child to turn his trencher and cut his meat, and whispering in his ear such simple jokes as children understand, kept him quiet and mannerly. Indeed David quite forgot the rest of us, and sat gazing up silently at Lister with that sweet lovely smile of his, looking so like an angel that even Mrs. Thorpe, as

I could see, found her heart melted to the child. In some ways, it seemed, Lister was less simple than he looked; for on his master's asking him what he remembered of Mr. Okell's sermon that morning, he gabbled off the heads of the discourse, and some of the particulars, with a wonderful accuracy of remembrance. (It seemed he had two uncles, ministers.) David catching up some of his words, repeated them in the very tone, chanting and somewhat pompous, of the Vicar, at which we all laughed.

"David will be a minister when he grows up, like William, won't you, David?" said Mrs. Thorpe.

"Yes," said David, nodding solemnly.

"Nay, there's one already in the family; one's enough," objected Mr. Thorpe. "David must be a master clothier, like his father."

I saw my father's face cloud at this, and Mrs. Thorpe saw it too, for she drew the talk back to preaching:

"Sermons," she said, "are not what they were in my young days."

At once my father and Mr. Thorpe were agreeing warmly. They were both of a Puritan cast of mind, that is to say, they believed in simple homely ways of religion, thinking that ceremonies were so many arrogant barriers between the soul and God. Bishops they greatly disliked, as Popish and tending to subject religious things to worldly authority, for Bishops were appointed by the King; and they both had great hopes that the Church in England would soon throw off all such encumbrances and stand forth as a reformed and truly Protestant Church, like some of those abroad. Some decrees of the late King James, which seemed to hinder this, had greatly vexed them. How could sermons have spiritual meat in them, complained my father now, when King James had given orders that preachers must adhere strictly to their texts—"strictly" being interpreted to admit only of what was favourable to the Bishops and himself?

"Aye, how indeed? It's against our just English liberties to restrict us so," said Mr. Thorpe.

"It all springs from James's notion of Divine Right," began Will, eager to show his learning in matters of religion. "The King believed he had a Divine Right by inheritance to rule his kingdom, and the Bishops a Divine Right to rule the Church."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Thorpe in a comfortable tone. "Help yourself to the ale, Will, and don't talk to me about Divine Right and such; it's nowt."

"Perhaps this new young King will do better for us," simpered Elizabeth. Her tone was foolish, but I was glad to find her interposing on behalf of Will.

"What, with a French Papist for a wife?" said Mrs. Thorpe. "It's not likely."

"Is King Charles's wife truly a Catholic?" asked Elizabeth.

She sounded shocked, and I felt shocked and uneasy too. Now that I am old, and have seen much life and many men of differing opinions, I find in myself a disposition (though I dare not confess it to my son) to believe that a good man may please God in any religion, Catholic or Church or Presbyterian, provided he follows it with his whole heart. But when I was a little girl, Catholics, to the ordinary English people, meant the foul treachery of the Gunpowder Plot to blow up Parliament, and persecutions, and Spain; and Spain meant attempts to murder our former great Queen Elizabeth, and to bring England under the rule of the Pope and suppress our English rights. So when Mrs. Thorpe nodded assent to her daughter, I had for a moment an uncomfortable feeling, as if something were suddenly unsafe and wrong, and I ventured to ask disapprovingly in my timid childish voice:

"Why did King Charles want to marry a Catholic lady?"

"All his family lean towards the Catholics, love," said Mrs. Thorpe. "All the Stuarts do. His grandmother, that daughter of Belial, Mary Queen of Scots, was a Catholic."

"You can hardly blame the poor lad for his grandmother," said my father with a twinkle in his eye.

"No—no," conceded Mr. Thorpe, though as it seemed with some reluctance. "But I blame him for choosing that Duke of Buckingham as his favourite."

"A most haughty and licentious man," Mrs. Thorpe said sternly. "He cannot guide himself aright, never name a king."

"Let us trust that the King will let himself be guided by Parliament," said my father.

"Aye, Parliament will keep an eye on him," said Mr. Thorpe with a grim relish. "If only he'll keep out of matters he knows nothing about! Look at that Cockayne business! It well nigh brought the whole cloth trade of England to destruction."

"What was the Cockayne project, Father?" asked John, his gruff voice sounding for the first time since we came to table.

"It was a proclamation, son, forbidding white cloths to be sent out of England. They were to be dyed and dressed at home by a company, headed by Sir William Cockayne, and not sent abroad except they were finished and coloured."

"Why did it bring ruin, then?" asked John.

"The foreign countries declined to buy the coloured cloths—they had always dyed and dressed the cloths themselves, and wished to continue the employment," explained my father.

"Aye! And besides, Sir William had no more idea how to dress and dye than little David here," said Mr. Thorpe. "Nay, he had less. I saw some of his wares at Hull. Cockled! I tell you, Robert, I've never seen the like, before or since. I wouldn't send such poor stuff out of Little Holroyd; I'd be ashamed. No wonder the foreigners wouldn't buy. More than seventeen thousand less cloths than customary were sent out of the port of London in the first three months that the Cockayne company was at work. The markets in London were loaded with unsold cloths, and the country was stuffed with 'em."

"Indeed we have had some strong blasts of adversity in the cloth trade of late," agreed my father. "I hear that

five thousand Yorkshire pieces lay unsold at Blackwell Hall last week. Is it true, do you know?"

His voice was low and hesitating, very unlike his usual clear tones, and Mr. Thorpe kept his eyes down as he answered: "Aye, Robert, it's true enough. I've fifteen there myself."

Mrs. Thorpe exchanged a glance with her husband, then spoke up briskly.

"Son," she said to John, "Penninah and David will like to see the farm. Joseph Lister, you can go with them. And you, Will and Elizabeth, have you nothing to say to each other? Take a walk down by the beck."

"Under favour," said Will, stammering: "I had thought to take Elizabeth to the afternoon exercises."

Mrs. Thorpe, well content with such a religious occupation, gave prompt permission, and Will and Elizabeth scrambled up and were off to Bradford Church before she had time to change her mind, though I thought Elizabeth looked as if she could have found something better to do on a June afternoon with a man she loved than listen to sermons. Still, at these afternoon exercises the listeners were allowed to walk about the church and talk if they were so minded, so perhaps it would not be as dull as she feared. The four of us children—as I suppose we were, though I felt quite a woman grown at the time—ran out of the house too, glad to escape from our elders' talk into the sunshine, and Lister began to jump David down from the steps outside the door. David laughed with glee, and as Lister caught him carefully in his big rough hands I saw no cause to forbid the pastime.

"Would you like to see our looms, Penninah?" said John beside me.

I had no great wish to do so, thinking they would be just like ours at home, but I could see John was proud of them and wished to show them, and I was willing to give him pleasure, so I followed him through the kitchen—where stood the biggest meal-ark I had ever seen, twice the size of ours—upstairs to the loom-chamber. It was silent and still, as was natural, being Sunday.

I saw at once that everything here was much finer and better kept than ours at home. There were three looms, each carrying an unfinished piece; his father would take one on horseback to Bradford next Thursday, John said, if he could get it fulled and milled at Bradford mill by then, and the other two would go with the carrier to Blackwell Hall in London, along with a heap of kerseys, thirty of them lying already in the corner. In the next chamber, the taking-in place, there was a huge pack of rough fleece wool, waiting to go out to be carded and spun, and then a pile of neat hanks of yarn, ready to be woven. In this chamber, too, three pairs of huge walker shears hung on the wall, their big broad blades all skew and dangling; we did not have such tools at home, so I did not know their employment till John told me that they were used in dressing the cloth, as were also the long curved shear board, the teasels in handles, the presses and press papers. All these things were polished and clean and orderly arranged; and long sheets of foolscap lay folded on a desk which stood on a table in the corner, so neatly written with figures and characters, I had never before seen anything like them. John seemed pleased when he saw my glance rest on these; he told me eagerly that he had kept the accounts, of wool and yarn and pieces, and where they went and when, and the price they gained, for his father for the last two years. To please him I went over to the desk and looked at them more closely; the sheets were neatly stitched together with pack thread at the side, and the figures all being in rows made broad and narrow margins by turn, like a pattern; I would not have believed that John's thick short fingers could have composed anything so pretty.

Then we went down the stairs again and out of doors, passing behind our parents on our way. Their heads were close and they were talking very earnestly, but seemingly in good friendship, to my relief; "they are discussing the marriage treaty," said John to me, smiling. His smile was a little stiff on its hinges, as if he did not use it often, so that I felt embarrassed to be watching it, though kindly towards

him, and turning aside asked what was the little low building on the right of the house, behind the tenters. John said it was the lead-house, where cloths were dyed. We had no lead-house, so partly in interest and partly to pass the time, I asked to see it, whereupon John ran to the house and begged the key of his father, and opening the door bade me hold my skirts tight, lest they be discoloured. Indeed the roof, walls, floor and pans, seemed all thickly smeared in blue; I did not like to withdraw in discourteous haste, since I had asked to see the place, but I was glad when John asked me if I would care to visit the laithe on the other side of the house. Here there was a mistal for the cows, a great bin of corn, a heap of hay with a fork stuck into it, and two brown horses with well-brushed tails, in narrow stalls. John slapped their haunches to make them turn so that I could see their heads, but indeed I wished he had not, for the strong beat of their hoofs as they moved, their glistening eyes and huge teeth, alarmed me, and I was loth to stroke their noses as John wished, though too proud to show my fear. The stables seemed close and dark, musty with floating shreds from the corn and hay, and very quiet, the only sound being that of the horses munching. John rested his arms along the top of the stall, leaned his head on his hand and fixed his gaze on me. Though his face was plain his eyes were very fine when he opened them wide, dark brown with a kind of glow in their depths, so that they gave him a very serious and expressive air; and suddenly I felt uneasy at being indoors alone so long with him, I wanted to be out in the air with other people about me. I said quickly:

"I must find David," and began to move towards the door.

"Lister will take good care of him," said John. But he did not try to detain me; with true kindness he roused up and led the way into the open without more ado.

It was now for the first time that I saw how well The Breck was situated, and what a fine prospect it had of Bradford. The house stood on a green slope, the fields,

divided here and there by low stone walls, rolling away down in front of it towards the town; away down to the right rose the square church tower, and the lines of the streets, Kirkgate and Ivegate and Westgate, were plain to be seen, though both Bradford Beck and Bowling Beck seemed hidden by the curve of the hills. I tried to distinguish our own house, but could not quite pick it out, though John, standing behind and pointing over my shoulder, guided my eyes towards the Packhorse Inn, which stood, then as now, at the corner of Westgate and Fairgap. The grey stone houses so neatly and cosily clustered in the dale, the many hills rising in courses behind the town, green on their lower slopes, darker towards the summits as the grass gave way to rock and heather, the nearby fields, patterned with buttercups and daisies or silvery green with oats, all made a pleasant picture beneath the blue sky and bright June sun; and as I could hear David's voice raised in laughter though he was out of sight, and judged he did not need me, I shaded my eyes with my hand and stood looking at the prospect for a while, John close at my side.

Then David laughed again and I turned and made towards the sound, John leading me. We climbed a flagged stile through a wall to the right of the house, and saw David with Joseph Lister. The field, which here led down to the small beck running close by the house, was dotted with sheep and this year's lambs; Lister had caught a lamb in his arms, and was holding it so that David could stroke its wool. A sheep's fleece, though very curly, is not as soft as it looks, but rather harsh and oily to the touch; David's face betrayed a surprise, and a kind of disappointment, mingled with delight, which was very comical, and we all stood and laughed together.

THE FERRANDS OWN HOLROYD HALL

THEN SUDDENLY THERE was a great splashing and trampling down by the beck, and a huge white horse came scrambling through the water over the stones and made straight as a dart up the field towards us, so it seemed it would surely trample us underfoot. A big brindled mastiff puppy, its tongue hanging, galloped fiercely at its side. We were all frightened and cried out, and scattered, running; at this the lad on the horse laughed down at us and struck its haunch with his whip, so that it flew up the field.

He was the handsomest lad I had ever seen; very slender and exactly well-proportioned, his complexion brilliantly fair, his hair a golden colour, very thick, softer than silk, and curling into loose great rings at the ends; his eyes a lively grey and full of vigour, his mouth very ruddy and graceful; his nose very straight, and a deep cleft in his chin. At the top of the field he set his horse at the wall; I screamed, for I thought he would not clear it, but he went over like a bird, and the mastiff with him, and before I had caught my breath he had leaped back again, the dog in scrambling over bringing a stone down from the top course. The lad eased his pace at the sound of this, looking back over his shoulder to see if the dog were injured, no doubt; then walking his horse back to the wall dismounted, and tucking his whip beneath his arm tried to raise the stone. It was too heavy for him; he beckoned imperiously to John to help him, and we all drew near, though for my part I kept David at a distance from the horse, for it was a huge heavy beast, and I feared its great hoofs.

"You fool, Francis!" cried John in angry tone: "What do you mean by frightening the children so?"

"He that calleth his brother a fool shall perish in hell fire," chanted Francis, mocking.

"You're not my brother, God be praised," muttered John.

"Cousin, then," said the lad. "The fire would be just as hot for a cousin." His speech was light and quick, and he laughed easily.

The cousins heaved up the stone together and wedged it on the wall, then Francis struck his hands fastidiously together to rid them of dust. He was very finely clad in a slashed doublet of bright blue silk, thickly trimmed with gold braid, with breeches and a short cloak all to match. John in his plain suit of black cloth looked a crow to a flower, beside him.

"I'm sorry if I alarmed you, mistress," said Francis, and he made me a wonderfully graceful bow, half in mockery and half in earnest. "Who is this young lady and what is her name?" he asked.

"She is sister to Will Clarkson and her name is Penninah," John told him, looking at me kindly.

"What an outlandish name!" laughed Francis, rolling his eyes at me. "It sounds like a mountain."

At this I hung my head, for I knew my father had chosen my name because it sounded like our Pennine Hills, which he loved dearly.

"It's a good Bible name," said John in his staunch way. "And if you can't be civil to our guests, Francis Ferrand, I'll thank you to keep off our land."

"I wish I had never come near your beggarly land!" shouted Francis.

"So do I," said John, looking squarely at him.

Francis exclaimed, and taking the bridle of the horse in his hand, began to lead it down towards the beck.

"Hi! Thunder!" he called to the mastiff.

We all turned and watched him, sorry in a way to see so much brightness leave us, and without quite meaning to follow trailed slowly after him down the slope.

"Whose horse is that, anyhow?" said John at last in a

still reluctant tone, as his cousin halted the animal to mount him.

"Father bought him yesterday at Adwalton Fair," replied Francis. "He's from the Fairfax stables, his name is Snowball."

"Won't Uncle Giles ride Betty any more?" mumbled John.

"He's grown too heavy for her," said Francis shortly. With a sudden quick spring he vaulted nimbly into the saddle, and this feat seemed to restore his good humour, for he gave us his brilliant flashing smile and cried out cheerfully: "Penninah, would you like a ride?"

God Almighty, who made the human heart and understands all its strange workings, doubtless knows why I had of a sudden such a strong desire to ride. I had never mounted a horse, I had no trust in Francis, yet I wished with all my heart to sit with him on that great white beast. I knew it would not become me to do so, however, so I merely shook my head and looked away. But David cried out suddenly:

"I want to ride! I want to ride!"

And he held out his arms to Francis, who laughed and swung him up to the saddle.

Then I took a quick step forward, for indeed—though that was not the whole of it—I could not let David ride alone; and Joseph Lister, grinning, bade me put my foot in his hand, and Francis reached down and swung me up, and before I knew what I meant I was perched astride of Snowball between David and Francis, looking down into Lister's grinning face and John's sombre one, below. I was suddenly grieved for John, and thought to say something kindly to him, but before I could do so Francis set the horse in motion, and we paced slowly round the field, John walking beside us all the way. Francis held me strongly, and his other hand, so fair and slender, was yet firm on the rein, so that I was not afraid. As we climbed up the field a little, a fine large house, with a courtyard and mounting-block and many mullioned windows, came into view on our right hand.

"That is Holroyd Hall, my father's house," said Francis, pointing to it proudly.

"Does Uncle Giles know you are riding his horse?" said John.

"No. But there's no harm in it," said Francis impatiently. "Don't be a spoil-sport, John. Why are you so cross to-day?"

John looked glum but said nothing, and Francis, lightly shaking the rein, caused Snowball to trot and then to canter. We soon left John and Lister far behind, and they ceased following us and took a course across the field to intercept us later.

"We'll jump the beck," said Francis in my ear, and he put Snowball to the gallop in that direction.

The horse flew over the uneven field, my heart beat fast, my hair streamed back in the wind of our passage, David laughed on a high shrill note, Thunder raced beside. We had topped the bank when suddenly John's face, crimson with anger, loomed up before me, there was a strong jerk at the bridle, and Snowball swerved aside and reared. David screamed in fear, and I threw my arms round the horse's neck, but John clung hardily to the bridle, and soon Snowball was standing on all four hoofs, trembling but obedient. Lister ran up and lifted the weeping David to the ground. John pulled me, somewhat roughly as I thought, down too.

"You fool, John!" shouted Francis, white with passion. "You nearly had us thrown."

"You meant to jump the beck," John panted.

"What's that to you? Do you think I can't ride a horse?" cried Francis.

"You can break your own neck if you like," said John, glaring up at him. "Indeed I'd be glad of it. But you shan't break Penninah's."

Francis laughed, and turning Snowball away from us down the bank, suddenly lashed at the horse's haunch with his whip. Snowball gathered himself for the jump and sprang. One moment horse and rider were in the

air, a gallant spectacle, the next they were rolling amongst the stones on the other side.

Snowball, thrashing wildly, jerked himself upright, tossed his mane and scrambled up the bank. But Francis lay still, with blood pouring from his nose and his arms outflung. The mastiff paused at a little distance, then came up and sniffed round him uneasily.

"O God, he's hurt!" cried John, splashing through the stream. "Frank! Frank!"

He knelt beside his cousin and wiped the blood away with a gentle care; it was borne on me then that as well as hating Francis he loved him dearly.

"Lister, run for my father," John ordered, looking up. "Penninah, go to the Hall and fetch Uncle Giles. Be sure to keep it from Aunt Sybil. There are stepping-stones across the beck further upstream." He pointed; I gathered my skirts and ran, little David wailing: "Pen! Pen!" after me as I went.

Sounds of music and talk met me as I neared the Hall, so that I feared to go in by the big door and ran instead to the back. The serving-men and maids I found in the kitchen were all dressed in bright colours, very lively and loud-mouthed, not at all like our Sarah or Mrs. Thorpe's sober elderly woman. However, when I said I came with a pressing message from Mr. Thorpe to Mr. Ferrand they treated me kindly enough; one of the men took down his livery coat from a hook behind the kitchen door, and led me along passages, till the music sounded close. I was much perplexed how to obey John's command and tell Francis's plight to his father while concealing it from his mother, and I suppose my face showed my trouble, for the serving-man, pausing to fasten his last button, stooped down to me, saying:

"What's to do, lovey?" in a very kind tone.

I ventured to tell him my message was not for Mrs. Ferrand; at this he nodded his head with a great air of understanding. "Master Francis is in a scrape again, I suppose," he said. He straightened himself up,

pulled down his doublet and threw open the parlour door.

"A pressing private message from Mr. Thorpe, sir," he said.

Such a chamber as now met my eyes I had never seen before; so high and large, with so many windows through which the afternoon sun richly poured, the walls so nobly panelled, the coat of arms painted in such glowing colours above the mantelshelf, the furniture so abundant and handsomely decorated. Then, such a profusion of pewter plates and tankards, jugs of wine and rich meats stood on the table as I had hardly believed to exist in the whole world; while the bright silks, the pearls and curls and ribbons, worn by the assembled company quite dazzled my childish eyes. A very fine-looking gentleman in red was playing on the viol. I hung back, blinking and, I doubt not, looking stupid enough. A lady on a settle by the hearth, whom I judged to be Francis's mother by reason of her hair, very golden like his, and a look both of him and Mr. Thorpe in her pretty silly face, called out pettishly to me to come in and close the door.

"Aye, come in, love," urged Mr. Ferrand cheerfully, taking a long pipe out of his mouth and blowing forth a cloud of smoke. "And who are you, my pretty little maid? 'Tis a pretty little maid, is it not, Sybil?"

"Very pretty, Giles," agreed Mrs. Ferrand distastefully. She could not speak her r's properly, but seemed somehow to swallow them, which made her speech seem pretty and silly and sweet all at once, just like herself. Children are not easily deceived about their elders, and I knew at once that Mrs. Ferrand could not bear to hear any female praised for beauty in her presence, even if it were but a child of eleven.

"But of a black complexion," added her husband to please her, for he knew it too. (This vexed me, for though my hair was dark, my skin had ever been pale and clear.) "Come, tell your errand, child," he urged impatiently. Perplexed what to do, I looked up at the serving-man,

who with nods and mouthed words and rolling glances managed to draw his master from the room.

"Well, what is this great secret, eh?" said Mr. Ferrand, laughing, when we stood in the passage together; he stooped down close to me and stroked my hair.

He was a large fleshy man, with a profusion of light brown hair and a twirled light moustache, very neatly trimmed. His complexion was very sanguine and his eyes prominent; his breath smelt of wine; I judged him to be of a warm uncertain temper, indulgent to the point of foolishness except when he was crossed, when he would be very choleric and masterful. He was in truth a fine handsome figure of a man, and kindly; but I had not seen any person like him before, and I felt some fear of him.

"Francis has been thrown from his horse, he's hurt," I whispered. "Down by the beck."

"What will that lad do next?" muttered Mr. Ferrand, making his way along the passages and out of the back door. He did not sound vexed, however, but rather pleased, as if at bottom he was proud of his son's escapades. "A horse? What horse?" he said in a loud tone when we were free of the house. "Ralph, come down with me, I may need you. A horse? What horse? By God, it's Snowball!" he roared suddenly, as Snowball came into view, galloping in nervous fright about the field below, scattering the sheep in all directions. At this Mr. Ferrand bounded forward, and shouted angrily: "Who took him out of the stable? I'll wring the varmint's neck! Well, don't stand there, you fool!" he bellowed, turning on the serving-man who was hurrying beside him: "Go and catch that horse!"

At this moment he reached the edge of the bank, and saw Francis lying on the stones, his head pillowed on his cousin's arm. Mr. Thorpe, bending over him, was throwing water on his face out of his high-crowned hat. The mastiff, Thunder, who was couched beside, at sight of his master thumped his tail once and raised his voice in a prolonged whine of misery and fear.

"Oh, Francis!" cried his father piteously, quite changing his tone. "Frank! My boy!" He charged down the bank and threw himself on his knees at his son's side. "Son! Will you hold your tongue, Thunder!" he shouted at the dog. "You'll bring your mistress down on us. Is he dead? Ralph, take that dog to the house."

"He's not dead," said Mr. Thorpe. And indeed Francis's eyes were opening, and it was plain he knew us, though there was a sick misery on his face. "Have you any pain, nephew?" said his uncle in a somewhat dry tone.

"Where is your hurt, Frank?" asked John.

"I'm not hurt," muttered Francis. He stirred in John's arms, and pulled himself up to sit erect. "I'm not hurt," he repeated staunchly, leaning his head on his hand and looking deathly white. "There's no call for all this pother. You might think nobody had ever been thrown from a horse before."

"What made you take Snowball from the stable?" demanded Mr. Ferrand, remembering this other grievance now that his son seemed safe.

"I wanted to ride him," returned Francis coolly. "John, help me to stand."

John put his arm round his cousin's waist and heaved him up. Francis swayed a little but managed to keep his feet, and began to stumble up the bank.

A shrill sound of voices now swept down on us, with the whining bark of the mastiff, who had drawn Mrs. Ferrand and her guests to the scene of Francis's misfortune.

"Here comes my sister," said Mr. Thorpe, pulling down his mouth in a rueful grimace.

And indeed I now understood the good sense of John's command to keep the matter from his aunt. Such cries, such throwing up of hands, such flutterings, such threatenings to faint, as Mrs. Ferrand now treated us to, I never could have believed possible. The poor woman was almost distraught, for Francis was the thing she loved best in all the world, but she had no means of expressing any emotion save silly words and trivial actions.

"Look at the blood on his new doublet!" she screamed, feverishly fingering her son's collar and smoothing out his hair.

"Oh, be quiet, Mother," said Francis wearily.

"Aye, let the lad be, Sybil," urged Mr. Thorpe. "He needs to rest."

But this admonition did not please her husband, who told his wife's brother hotly that he was well able to care for his own son without anyone else's counsel. One of his guests—the man in red, whose name was Tempst, it seemed he came from Bolling Hall—offered to go for his physician, and this offer was accepted. Meanwhile Mr. Ferrand pushed John aside and himself supported Francis up the bank. Poor Mrs. Ferrand took the boy's other arm, looking into his face fondly, though indeed she was more of a drag than a support to him.

I stood and watched them go.

"Farewell, Pen. I'm sorry I frightened you," said Francis, stretching out his hand to me across his mother.

I took his fingers—warm, strong and slender—within my own. "I am sorry you are hurt, Francis," I told him quietly.

Francis laughed suddenly, and his grey eyes sparkled.

"Well, I rode Snowball," he said.

THREE MEN AGREE TO DIFFER

As we went back to The Breck we met my father and Mrs. Thorpe, coming to see whether Francis's hurt were serious. At sight of them I halted suddenly.

"Where is David?" I cried.

Mrs. Thorpe reassured me. It seemed David had followed Lister to the house on his errand; he was frightened by Francis's fall and inclined for weeping, so she had left him there with the apprentice. I hurried to The Breck, reproaching myself for having so long forgotten him. But I need not have troubled, for he was sitting on the step with Lister, weaving a daisy chain. As soon as David saw me he ran to me, and as I stooped to him he tried to throw the chain round my neck. Mr. Thorpe made some remark I did not hear, and my father replied:

"He has been her charge since I lost Faith."

His voice trembled, as it always did when he spoke of my mother, and Mr. Thorpe seemed sorry. The shadows were lengthening and it was time for us to be gone, but out of kindness he would have us stay to supper, and Mrs. Thorpe pressed our acceptance of the invitation, though I think she had not meant it to be so when we first came, for there was a great bustle in the house to make things ready. By that time, however, I was no longer timid with the Thorpes. They seemed old friends, for we had been through much together, and the Ferrands being so grand had somehow brought the Thorpes down nearer our level. So I asked plainly whether David might be put to sleep on one of the beds upstairs, and Mrs. Thorpe was very kind with him, wrapping him in an old house-coat of her own and putting an embroidered coverlet over him. Then I

asked if I might help with the supper, and she gave me trenchers and tankards to carry. John and Lister were out watering the horses, but my father and Mr. Thorpe were sitting very friendly together in the dusk when I brought them a candle.

"Never fear, Robert," Mr. Thorpe was saying, "we will bring the business to a fair end. Thank you, child," he said, taking the stick from my hand: "You are a very sober and virtuous little maid, Penninah."

At this my father drew me to him, and I leaned against his knee, content.

Presently supper was ready. Will and Eliza came in from church and a dallying walk home, half-dazed with happiness; when they heard of Francis's fall from Snowball they plied John eagerly with questions. He was very loth, I could see, to answer, he looked tired and sad; so I answered instead, telling the story as truthfully as I could. I could see my father and the Thorpes all thought John a hero, for preventing Francis jumping with David and me on his horse's back. I thought so too, and was truly grateful to him for David's sake; but I could not help a slight grudge against him also, for I thought if Snowball had been allowed to take his own course unhindered, he might easily have cleared the beck, and that would have been a joy to see.

Then suddenly Mr. Ferrand came in, very large and bright and jovial, and told us that the physician had been and pronounced Francis not hurt but only severely shaken; the lad begged his uncle's pardon, he said, for behaving unmannerly on his land, and he himself was sorry that he had spoken sharply down by the beck.

"I meant no harm, Tom," he shouted in his loud cheerful voice. "I was distressed about the lad—that lad'll be the death of me one of these days. Sybil dotes on him. I offer my apologies."

Mr. Thorpe in a gruff but ungrudging tone bade him think no more of it. Then he made my father and Mr. Ferrand known to each other, and they were all very

friendly together. But soon somehow they fell into an argument I did not quite understand, about sheep and wool. Mr. Ferrand, it seemed, was not a clothier, but a gentleman; he owned land and kept sheep, and he thought it right to sell their wool abroad. But Mr. Thorpe grew very warm and angry, and said that to sell English wool to foreign countries was to ruin the English cloth trade.

"If they take to making cloth abroad, what are we clothiers here to live on?" he said.

"Aye, and many poor men here who only subsist by spinning and carding of wools," added Mrs. Thorpe.

"It is a deep question," said my father thoughtfully.

"There's nowt deep about it. Exporting wools from England," said Mr. Thorpe, "ought to be forbidden by law."

"You want to ruin me, do you?" snorted Mr. Ferrand. "Who'll grow your wool for you then, eh? Forbidden by law! As far as I know, it's lawful for an Englishman to do what he likes with his own."

"It's to be hoped the new King will think so," grumbled Mr. Thorpe, "and not start levying taxes before Parliament grants them, like his father."

"He'll think so right enough, God bless him," cried Mr. Ferrand heartily, "if the Parliament give him proper supplies without too much talk and dallying. He's a gradely lad is Charles. Give him a chance now, Thomas; don't curb him before he starts."

"There are certain grievances which he ought to remedy," put in my father mildly.

"I don't deny it, Mr. Clarkson, I don't deny it for a moment," conceded Mr. Ferrand. "But the Government has to be carried on, you know. England's good name is at stake, abroad. We're fighting for the King's sister against the Spaniard, after all. Supplies must come first, for England's sake."

"Grievances must come first," objected Mr. Thorpe. "If they don't come first, they don't come at all."

"Religion comes first," said my father quietly.

They all looked at him with respect, and were silent.

"That is very true, Robert Clarkson," said Mrs. Thorpe at length, and her husband muttered agreement, while Mr. Ferrand gave an embarrassed cough of an approving kind. "After all this worldly talk," she went on: "we shall do well to refresh our souls with holy words. Robert Clarkson, will you read to us? Son, get the Bible."

"It is Will who means to be a minister," said my father, smiling.

"Let it be Will, then," agreed Mrs. Thorpe. "Will you stay and hear a chapter, Giles?"

"Nay, nay!" said Mr. Ferrand hurriedly, rising. "Chapters are nowt in my line. I heard enough to last me my life when I was courting your Sybil here. Church once a week is enough for me. I'd best be off. No offence meant, Tom."

"None taken, Giles," murmured Mr. Thorpe.

"Glad to have made your acquaintance, Mr. Clarkson," went on Mr. Ferrand affably. "And that of the little maid here. So your lad's to be a minister, eh? Very right and proper. Well, good-night all."

He gave us a bow, and went off, humming and twirling his moustache.

I loved to hear my father read, as his voice was always very clear and beautiful, but I did not grudge his refusal, since the honour of reading gave Will such pleasure. He flushed with pride when John took the great Bible from its carved box and laid it on the table before him and set the candlesticks beside. Will turned the pages reverently, but seeming a little uncertain where to choose; at last he read, stumbling now and then but with great earnestness, that beautiful psalm seventy-two, where King David prays for righteousness with which to judge his people. He was thinking of our new King Charles, no doubt, put in mind of him by the three men's talk. Just as he began, our little David appeared and stood shyly at the door, trailing Mrs. Thorpe's gown behind him, his cheek warm with sleep, his fair hair rumpled. I took him on my lap and he listened gravely.

"He shall deliver the needy when he crieth ; the poor also, and him that hath no helper. . . . He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence : and precious shall their blood be in His sight,"

read Will.

I shall never forget our people as we sat that night; my father with his silver head bowed, gleaming in the candle-light, his eyes closed in prayerful meditation; Mr. Thorpe with his arms folded and his head thrown up a little sideways, a good staunch look on his cheerful red face; Mrs. Thorpe very stern and upright in her chair; David quiet in my arms, Elizabeth smiling and plucking nervously at her gown in love of Will. John sat in the deep shadow behind me; I should hardly have known he was there save that once, when David twitched and the cushion behind my shoulder slipped, a hand came out of the darkness and put it in place.

When Will had finished the psalm, we made our farewells quietly and went away home. Will carried David, my father took my hand. John attended us silently down the lane with a lantern.

So ended the day I first met John Thorpe and Francis Ferrand. I remembered them both in prayer before God, that night.

THREE CHILDREN ARE FRIENDS

THE NEXT DAY, about the middle of the afternoon, there came a loud rhythmical knocking on our house door, as though someone were playing a tune on it, and when Sarah ran in affright to open, there stood Francis, somewhat pale but gay and lively, with Thunder at his heels.

The moment the door stood wide and Thunder espied our cat Tabby, who was sitting peacefully on the hearth gazing into the fire, he gave a loud excited bark and rushed for her, tossing Sarah's skirts and almost knocking her down. Sarah, who was gaunt and sallow, and apt, like many people of that complexion, to be cross, threw up her hands and scolded shrilly, Tabby flew up the cupboard and clung there spitting and clawing, Thunder leaped up and down barking below, and Francis shouted: "Down, sir!" Such a clamour had never been heard in our quiet house before, and my father came down from the loom-chamber, in astonishment.

Francis, dragging Thunder back from Tabby by the collar, explained somewhat breathlessly that his father had sent him to show himself to us so that we might be reassured as to his health after yesterday's mishap. My father smiled kindly, and said, not without a playful malice, that he was perfectly reassured, then he went away back to his work again. David now began to weep and cling to my hand, for he was terrified of Thunder, whereupon Francis, kneeling down between dog and child, and holding each in one arm, tried to make them like each other. He did not use the best persuasions, I thought, for he told David he was too big a boy to be frightened of a dog, and this sounded to me too scornful; however, to please Francis

I stroked Thunder's ears myself, though fearfully, and so coaxed David to lay his little hand on the dog's great fawn and black head. Thunder thumped his great tail, and a watery smile stole over David's face. Francis then pulled down Tabby, and began to try and make dog and cat friendly, rubbing their noses together and the like, and David laughed a little at this, though timidly.

While we were all kneeling thus together on the ground, I heard a movement, and looking up, saw John standing in the doorway, we having left the door open. There was a strange look on his dark plain face, a mixture of anger, contempt and affection. I bade him come in and welcome, and he said gruffly he could not stay long, he was on his way home from school. Our house was not in the way from Bradford School to Little Holroyd at all, and I feared lest Francis should say so; however, he made no remark, but throwing himself down on the settle, which Sarah quickly dusted with her apron, he took Tabby in his arms and made Thunder sit by him with his great head on his master's knee, and continued his attempts to make them like each other. Indeed Thunder was willing enough, laying his great paw gently on the cat and seeming almost to smile over his puppy face, but Tabby's fur was still erect, and her green eyes glowed angrily. I now remembered my manners and offered John a chair, but he seemed too shy to take it, and sat himself awkwardly on a buffet.

The settle on which Francis was lounging was splintered at its foot, and John, spying this as he looked about him with his kind brown eyes, now offered to mend it, forgetting that he had said he could not stay. I was doubtful at first, for neither Will nor my father had much skill in carpentry and I was not used to seeing such work, but Sarah was very eager for him to try his hand, and bustled about fetching him such tools as she could discover. The settle was heavy and ill-placed for light, and John asked me to hold a candle for him so that he could manage better. Pleased, as children are, to be doing something new, I lighted a candle and bent down to him, gladly obeying his directions, David

watching eagerly. I soon saw that John was able at the work, and exclaimed at his skill and kindness in performing it. At this he lifted his face, crimson from stooping, and remarked gruffly:

"While you hold the candle, Penninah, I am content."

"It's a high payment, certainly," laughed Francis, caressing Tabby so that she purred.

"Higher than you'll ever earn," said John, sardonic.

"Don't be too sure," cried Francis hotly.

"You'll never addle owt in all your life, Francis Ferrand," said John, using the homely country speech to vex his cousin.

"I have no need," said Francis haughtily.

"No—you're a gentleman, or so I've heard," said John.

"I don't like your tune," said Francis. He rose, throwing down the cat, and stood over John, flushing ominously.

"Hold the candle still, Penninah," commanded John, and he put his hand on my wrist to steady it, for at the thought of further contention between these two my fingers trembled.

Then Francis shook the settle purposely with his foot, and John sprang at him, and they rolled over and over on the floor, wrestling and striking. David and I cried out, frightened, and my father ran down from the loom-chamber again at the noise, and with a look of gentle displeasure on his face ordered them to behave more mannerly. At the sound of his voice the two boys disentangled themselves and rose up, dusty and panting and regarding each other sheepishly, but not, as I saw with relief, really angry. My father dismissed them sharply, and they went out without a word.

I ran to the window to watch them up the street; and saw that Francis had thrown his arm round John's shoulder and was laughing in his ear, while John, though somewhat grimly, was smiling. Seeing my surprise at this sudden reconciliation, my father told me I was not to trouble myself over their battles. It was natural for boys to fight, he said, and there was no malice between them afterwards.

I should often, he repeated, see John and Francis fighting and then friends.

It was a true word. Whenever John and Francis met, they quarrelled and made friends again, and I saw it often, for from that time onwards, the Clarksons and the Thorpes and the Ferrands were very close in intimacy.

There was much visiting between Fairgap and The Breck. Many a Sunday we Clarksons dined there, roaming through the fields of Little Holroyd in the afternoon, or gathering bluebells in the woods, or climbing higher, when the heather was out, to the purple moors. Mr. Thorpe often dined at our house on Thursday, when he came into Bradford for Market Day, and John's way from school seemed often to lie past our door. When he left school, as he did in a few months' time, his visits were scarcely rarer; almost every day he brought some message about cloth from his father to mine, or about meeting, from Eliza to Will, or came in on his own account to see how things went with us. It came to be taken for granted that when a hinge, or the leg of a chair, or a loom treadle, or Sarah's churn, needed repair, it was shown to John, who forthwith mended it, while I held the candle.

Francis also came much to our house, because he began to read Latin with Will. It seemed he was much behind in his studies, from carelessness and truancy, and Mr. Ferrand, who thought of sending him to Oxford university with the sons of his friends the Tempests of Bolling Hall, had been told by the schoolmaster, Mr. Wilcocke, that if Francis did not mend his ways he would disgrace himself as a scholar. So twice a week Francis, Thunder lolloping behind him, came to Will with his Tully. Such a volume you never saw; dirty and dog's-eared, with great scrawled jokes in the margin, some of which Francis would not let me see. I was so young and so unworldly then that I did not understand what this meant, but took it for simple unkindness on his part and was hurt by it, whereat he seemed very sorry. The exercises that he wrote for Will, too, were so blotted and untidy as to be almost illegible, and declensions

and conjugations seemed to pass in at one of Francis's handsome ears only to pass out at the other. Indeed he nearly drove poor Will distracted, so that one afternoon, in a fit of warm temper such as sometimes took him, he rushed up to Holroyd Hall and threw the money for his tutoring on the table in front of Mr. Ferrand, crying that he could not in conscience take it, for he had not earned it. Mr. Ferrand was quite taken aback, and he must for once have berated his son severely, for Francis came down to Fairgap that night with a very hangdog look, and made many expressions of contrition and better behaviour for the future. For a week or two he was a model pupil, but soon slipped back into his old careless ways again, so that Will's worried look grew deeper.

But for all that we all loved Francis. Even our long-faced Sarah, who was very prim and godly and had been betrothed for years to a strict Puritan who had twice been fined for absenting himself from church on grounds of conscience, though she professed to regard Francis as an offspring of the evil one, did not scold when he pulled her apron-strings undone or called her Maypole in jest, and only pretended to box his ears when he stole up on her and kissed her. When Francis came she baked fresh oat-cake, and gave the chairs a polish beyond ordinary; she would not wear the bright ribbons he brought her, but she kept them folded away in a wooden box which my mother had given her before she died. Tabby too became quite enamoured of Thunder, and the two played together often, Thunder rolling the cat over with his great jowl, and Tabby dabbing at his nose with her soft paws. I did not much like to see them, nor did David, for their play looked to us too much like cruelty, but when I wished to interfere Francis held me back, laughing heartily, and with sparkling eyes told me they enjoyed it. Francis in those days had such a pleasantness and gaiety of humour, such a clear high courage, such a real sweetness of nature beneath his rushing spirits, such charm of manner and such a graceful person as endeared him to all who knew him. It was

very agreeable to me to see him standing in our house before my father, one hand on hip, the other swinging his hat, his eyes sparkling with the laughter affection kept from his lips, listening with a great air of respect to my father's gentle admonitions, and promising him in a teasing voice to amend.

"Noise and swiftness," my father told him in his clear mild tones, looking over his spectacles at the lad's bright face: "are not to be confused with action, Francis."

"No, sir," returned Francis. "Nor silence and slowness either, I suppose, sir."

"God," said my father, a little fluttered, "was not in the great wind or the earthquake or the fire; He was in the still small voice."

"Yes, sir," agreed Francis. He smothered a yawn, for the moment any talk grew religious his attention wandered.

My father sighed, then smiled. "Well, be off with you into the sunshine," he said. "I fear you will never be a wise man, Frank Ferrand."

"No, sir!" cried Francis, springing away in great joyous bounds. "Come out into the orchard, Pen."

Besides Will, Francis had many other tutors, for music, dancing, fencing and the like; indeed in Bradford some folk laughed at Giles Ferrand, who was bringing his son up as though he were a nobleman, they said, and wondered how long his estate would stand it. I have heard Mr. Thorpe, for instance, say to my father that if Giles would mind his bowls less and his land more, things would be in a better way at Holroyd Hall.

When I was with the Thorpes I felt that this was doubtless true, but when I was with the Ferrands I was apt to think it was better to spend and be happy than save and be glum, and I did not take Mr. Thorpe's observations seriously, for I never saw any sign of distress over business or scarcity of money—such as we sometimes had at Fairgap, when my father looked grave and talked soberly to Will—at Holroyd Hall. We children ran in and out of the Hall whenever we liked, without a set invitation, as we dared not do at The

Breck; and I could not help liking to go there, for everything there seemed bright and quick and easy. There was always much rich meat and drink, and many serving men and maids hastening to and fro, and Mr. Ferrand roaring away cheerfully in his fine stables or playing at bowls on a little alley he had made, and Mrs. Ferrand dressing her hair before the mirror, or coaxing her husband with her pretty eyes and sweet silly speech to get money from him for some piece of furniture or new gown, and Francis fencing, very supple and nimble on his feet, or playing on the lute, of which he had some mastery. When I think of Holroyd Hall in those days, I always see it in golden sunshine, with tall daisies and buttercups in thick grass, and an elder-bush in flower, and music and laughter spilling from the windows. The meals were often unpunctual, the panelling was dusty, there was such a waste of food and drink as the mere thought of would have made Mrs. Thorpe mad; but nobody scolded us if we came to the table with hands unwashed or tore our clothes; it was thought natural for us, being children, to play; and whenever Mrs. Ferrand saw us she carelessly and lightly and serenely gave us something—an apple, a ribbon, a drink of milk. I marvelled sometimes how she could be so, being Mr. Thorpe's sister, but it seemed Mr. Ferrand was a great match for a Thorpe and had condescended in marrying her, and she, being a sunny feather-headed girl easily swayed, took all his ways for gospel and was happy in them. Certainly she was happy enough when I first knew her; everyone was happy then at Holroyd Hall. Occasionally Mr. Ferrand would burst out into a tremendous storm of anger, from which we all ran and hid ourselves, but soon it would be over and the sky clear again—Mrs. Ferrand had only to weep to bring him to heel, for he had a soft heart beneath his blustering. Yes, life at Holroyd Hall seemed to me a perpetual holiday; and yet there was something missing in it. There was pleasure enough there, to be sure, but never that deep content and satisfaction which comes from a good deed nobly done. There was no gathering of one's

powers firmly and sternly together for the performance of some task one set oneself; anything done there was done, it seemed, by chance and without intention.

At The Breck it was just the reverse. There was little joy or laughter there, but always the deep satisfaction of rigorous duties, honourably performed. The Thorpes rose early, laboured honestly all day, gave thanks to God and went to rest. Every corner of their life, as of their house, was fit at all times to be scanned, being clean, orderly and sober. Their integrity was of the strictest; no weaver or spinner of theirs was ever defrauded by so much as a halfpenny, their word was their bond, they owed no man anything and bought nothing for which they could not instantly pay. They dealt as carefully with poor folks as with rich, and despised all ostentation as vain and foolish. In charity they were punctual, in friendship steady. Indeed there was a great steadiness in them all, especially in John; he never began anything lightly, nor turned back from it when it was begun. He could not be tempted from the loom during his hours of work, nor would he delay seeing after the animals by so much as a minute, though he did not love them and have a natural mastery over them, like Francis. At The Breck there was no rich colour, no sweet sound; but there was always a dark implacable strength—the Thorpes indeed were as strong in their unyielding principles as those grim black crags one saw on the moors, while the Ferrands were like the slender blue harebells that danced and flowered at their foot.

It seems strange to me now that a little maid in her teens, such as I was then, should have seen the natures of the Thorpes and the Ferrands so clearly. But it was customary then to talk often, among sober and godly people, of the higher nature and the soul and the approach of men of different beliefs to God, so that I was used to discourse about abstract qualities. Then, too, I spent much time with my father, who made a companion of me in default of my mother and spoke to me of many lofty matters; and since his eyes were apt to ache and water if he read overlong,

and I was fond of my book, I read often aloud to him from the diurnals or from religious pamphlets, and learned much so. Besides, my family, as I see now, were rather above the common in intellect.

This appeared clearly in little David, who began to attend Bradford School the year after I first met the Thorpes and Ferrands. So swift was he in learning that he stayed little more than a twelvemonth in Petty School; he was moved up into the Grammar School and began Latin accidence before he was seven. Through anxious listening to Francis's lessons I had learned enough Latin to be able to hear David his tasks, which he said was helpful to him, though I do not think this can have been so, for the child hardly ever made a mistake or needed prompting. He sat beside me on the settle, his fair round face very quiet and attentive, and almost before the question was out of my mouth he would sing out the answer in his high childish treble, pronouncing his quantities very strictly and giving copious examples and exceptions. My father, who knew no Latin and had always longed for it, listened with a happy smile to this; and dear Will, whose studies had required much arduous application, was delighted and amazed at the ease with which little David got his lessons. The child passed swiftly through Acsop's Fables and Cato's Maxims and came to Caesar and Tully, and found those authors easy, and on Fridays when the Grammar School boys translated their week's translations back into Latin, David's lines were often commended most highly of any for the grace and purity of their latinity. Will was so proud of his brother that he constantly boasted of him, and would sometimes even reproach Francis for being a worse scholar than a so much younger child.

This was not wise of Will, for though Francis cared little for scholarship, at any such hint his face was apt to cloud. Francis was in general free of all mean grudges, having only an honourable emulation towards those who surpassed him in sports, which indeed few did; but towards David he was never perfectly open and free. Nor was David

so to Francis. John and David on the other hand had a fast though silent friendship. At that time, though I knew this difference in the cousins, I did not rightly know its cause; later I understood it very well.

At that time, indeed, I was only a child in spite of my grave ways and lofty (as I believed) thinking; though I perceived clearly enough the difference in those around me, I did not trouble about it, but loved them all in their different ways, and was able to be happy with each in turn.

My life then was indeed a quietly happy one. Under Sarah's guidance I learned the management of our house; I took pains that everything in it should be clean and neat, our table well furnished with my brothers' favourite dishes—as for my father, he ate little and could not tell you what he had put in his mouth if you asked him—and our linen and apparel well repaired. In all matters of the house, I consulted Mrs. Thorpe if I were in some special difficulty; in matters of the needle, I went to Mrs. Ferrand, who, by example though not by precept, of which she was incapable, taught me her own delicate taste. In the day I laboured thus gladly for those I loved; in the evening I listened to Francis, or talked to John, or heard David his lesson, or—and this was still my dearest joy—sat reading to my father. Mr. Thorpe often said teasingly that my father would spend his last penny on a pamphlet. There were many such publications stirring, and often when Mr. Thorpe heard that my father had a new one, he came to our house to hear it read and explained. Others too came gladly to hear my father at these times; and I was happy to see him so well respected, his true worth recognised, and took pride in helping him by reading to him with understanding, carefully and well.

TRUE LOVE FLOWERS

AFTER A TIME I began to feel a strangeness in Mrs. Ferrand's manner to me.

I was ever a favourite with Mr. Ferrand, for he was a carnally minded man, setting great store on shows and appearances, and he was pleased to consider that I had some beauty. When I was a child, and he drew me to him and fondled me, as he often did, calling me his pretty little penny and such foolish but kindly names, Mrs. Ferrand was wont to pout and protest, saying pettishly: "Giles, you will spoil the child," and the like; but once he had desisted from his caress, she seemed not to hold it against me. But now that I was growing from a child into a girl, her manner changed on such occasions; she made no protests, and simply sat in silence as if indifferent, her eyes not meeting mine; but I felt beneath her compliant air a secret hostility. While the men spoke of politics and affairs, she would draw me to one side and admire my gown—this was such a palpable untruth that it embarrassed me, for my dress was always dark and plain and ill-cut by comparison with hers. At other times, when we were alone, I having sought her advice about some needle-work, she would talk to me of Francis, and then her speech was so strange, and so at variance with itself, that I was hard put to it to understand her. For she told in the same breath how devoted Francis was to her and how he swore he would never leave her to marry, and how his father was already about a marriage treaty for him with a young lady from Halifax; and how he was soon to go to Oxford and how he hated learning and would never attend a University; and how he had promised her he would never

be a soldier and how he was always begging his father to let him go to the Low Countries to fight; so that I was quite bewildered with so many contradictions, and found it difficult to make suitable replies.

The oft repeating of these conversations began to make me uneasy, for though I was uncertain of Mrs. Ferrand's meaning I was sure, from the tone in which she spoke, that it held some point disagreeable to me, and I began to puzzle over what she could intend, and be unable to dismiss the question from my mind. As a result, I became troubled over the lessons Francis took with Will. If Francis were not to go to the University, as his mother hinted, there was no more need of these lessons; and the more I thought about it, the more probable it seemed to me that Mrs. Ferrand was hitting at them, and that Francis continued them only out of generosity to Will. My cheek burned at the thought, for I was ever somewhat proud, and I began to think that my father and Will were unworldly simple people, too credulous of what men said to them to perceive hidden meanings, and that there would often be times when I, though so much younger, would see more clearly than they.

At last I could bear it no longer, I took a decision to open the matter with Francis. On the next evening when a lesson was due, therefore, I told Sarah I wished to speak with Francis alone for a moment before Will came in. She gave me a snort and a surly look, but nodded.

It was a lovely summer evening, and David being at church singing in the choir, as he did three times every week, my father and Will and I were sitting together in our little orchard, when Sarah came to the door and beckoned me. I ran in, and was a little disconcerted to meet Mr. Ferrand in the doorway; he had come, as he sometimes did, to pay Will his fee, it being the month's end. However, he passed on out into the garden after a hearty greeting, and I went in. Francis was lounging against the table, his fine feathered hat dangling in his hand; he sprang up as I entered and made me one of his teasing graceful bows.

"Francis," I said all in a breath, fearing to lose my courage if I halted, "you do not really wish these lessons, you take them out of mere kindness to Will."

For a moment he stood quite still, neither speaking nor moving, very tall and slender and erect, as always, his handsome head flung up and his grey eyes fixed on mine.

"What makes you think I do not wish them?" he said then.

His voice was not like his own, but deep and angry; I answered, troubled, that it was some words his mother had let fall.

Francis laughed in his new deep tone.

"And why did she tell you that, Pen? Don't you know? Don't you know?" he urged me in a fond teasing tone. He laughed again, and went on, for I was silent: "She thinks I am like to fall in love with you, Penninah Clarkson. And she is right."

The blood rushed from my heart to my cheek; I stood still and silent before him, with my eyes downcast; I could not raise my head, or stir, or utter.

"Pen!" said Francis, very warm and low, and he took a step towards me.

Totally confused, I murmured: "Frank!" but yet put up my hands as a barrier against him. He took them in his own, and the next moment I was in his arms. Laughing, his grey eyes sparkling, he kissed me warmly.

It was a moment brimming with joy and sweetness. I yielded my lips to his in love, and stroked his warm golden head with joyful fingers; for indeed my heart was his and in some sense has ever stayed so.

Then a great laugh rang out, and there stood Mr. Ferrand and my father and Will in the doorway, entering from the orchard. I was so young and simple that, though I blushed as I turned to look at them, it never struck me to spring away from Francis, nor did he drop his arm from about my waist. At this Will cried out vehemently: "Penninah! What are you thinking of?" in warm reproach; but Mr. Ferrand twirled his moustache and laughed, and said:

"Come, come! A little boy and girl sweethearting will do them no harm." My father, smiling very kindly, put his hand on Francis's shoulder and said:

"Indeed I think it may not."

"Thank you, sir!" cried Francis, laughing gaily up at him.

So after that Francis and I were always sweethearts.

II

DISSENSION

“YOU ARE AN ARMINIAN, SIR!”

THE FIRST TIME I understood that the things I read in the diurnals could concern ordinary people like ourselves was over the matter of Will's getting a place.

I had read about the course of affairs in the King's first Parliament, how the members granted the King the right to levy taxes for one year only, and then before promising him any more supplies began to make petitions about religion and bring accusations against the Duke of Buckingham, which angered the King so much that he dissolved that Parliament, so that it sat no more. My father shook his head over this and said it was a bad augury for a new reign, and I in my childish way agreed gravely, and was angry about the Duke and grieved that the young King should be so misled; but to me it was like an old historical tale or a piece out of the Bible, something that roused one's feelings strongly and gave one moral instruction, but was all over long ago and a long way off. I was glad when the King was obliged to call another Parliament because he needed money for wars abroad and the Court at home, and could not get what he needed without a Parliament's consent; but I had no notion that it would ever concern us in Bradford. But then, to put the members in a proper humour for granting subsidies, the King had sermons preached to both Houses of this new Parliament by a man whose name I heard for the first time, namely Bishop Laud. This Laud told the Parliament flatly that the King was God's lieutenant on earth, and the King's power was God's power—the blood came into my father's face when he heard this, and Will struck the table sharply, crying: “Divine Right! What did I tell you? Divine Right!” Will's temper

had been very uneven of late, so that David and I were quite uncomfortable with him; but I had no notion that this bad Bishop, with his Arminian views, as they were called, could have anything to do with Will's crossness. But not long after, this same Bishop had it proclaimed that nobody might discuss, either in writing or preaching, opinions contrary to the doctrine and discipline of the Church. It was our Vicar, Mr. Okell, who told us this one evening when he called to see my father on some churchwarden business. It was a cold night and we were all sitting round the fire.

"Discipline!" said my father, making a wry face. "I hate the word. True religion cannot be imposed by order, from above, as the Arminians seem to think."

"Aye," began Will, "and besides——"

Then suddenly he coloured up and his mouth shook, and with a strange cry he sprang from his chair and rushed away from us. Mr. Okell looked after him kindly, then turned towards my father with a question in his eyes. My father shook his head, and Mr. Okell shook his own white head in sympathy. I stole away after Will, and found him upstairs in the cold loom-chamber, his head buried in his hands, groaning. I asked if he were sick, but he told me "No," and bade me leave him, somewhat roughly. I was perplexed, but since neither he nor my father, even when Mr. Okell had left us, offered to tell me what was wrong, I did not like to ask. Some while later David, who shared a bed with Will, confided to me that he thought Will was wretched because he wanted to be married and Mr. Thorpe would not let him. As the marriage treaty between Will and Eliza had long been signed, this puzzled me still further, and I thought David must be wrong, for I noticed that Will was always most put out after we had been reading the diurnals.

Indeed the news was not good, for Laud's sermon having provoked the Parliament, it did not hurry to grant any subsidies, but began to attack the Duke; whereupon the King hastily scolded and dissolved it, before it was six

months long. Parliaments, he said, were altogether in his power—an observation fit to madden any Englishman. What was worse, having no subsidies lawfully granted him, he now began to levy them illegally, without consent, and began also to demand loans from the gentry, and to tax merchants' goods entering the country from abroad; and many of the Arminian clergy began to preach sermons, exhorting their people to pay these loans and taxes. This all seemed to me very wicked, but still it did not strike me that it could happen nearer than London, for in Bradford we had no such sermons, Mr. Okell being a staunch Puritan and no lover of either the King or Laud. About this time Will began to spend more hours at the loom and fewer at his books, and his temper grew worse daily, but I was still quite in the dark as to why it should be so.

Then one day, when we were all dining at Holroyd Hall, it was made clear to me. The occasion was Francis's birthday; the Ferrands had many guests, and we were all at table. Mr. Ferrand was joking in a rather lewd way, as he loved to do, and he suddenly asked Will in a loud jovial tone when he was going to get a benefice and be able to marry. Poor Will coloured to his ears, and began stammeringly to explain that nowadays it was not easy for a young man of his views to find a Bishop or patron to appoint him. At once I saw the whole matter, for Mr. Thorpe, as his uncomfortable look now showed, would not wish Will and Eliza to marry till Will was in a fair way to gain his living.

"It is said that Bishop Laud gives the King lists of clergy marked O and P," went on poor Will, more vehement as his anger gained on him: "O for Orthodox, who are to have promotion, and P for Puritan, who are not. Others with benefices in their gift take the cue, for fear they will be had up for heresy before the court of Star Chamber."

"And very properly," roared Mr. Ferrand in his loud cheerful voice. "You cannot have a Church without a government; you cannot have these Puritans doing just as they choose. A set of dirty arrogant rascals, saving your presence, Tom and Robert, preaching all over the place

and behaving saucily to their betters. We must have decency and order."

"You are an Arminian, sir!" cried my father sternly on a sudden.

Mr. Ferrand looked taken aback. "What do the Arminians hold?" he enquired doubtfully.

My father, his sudden warmth gone, smiled and replied: "They hold all the best bishoprics and deaneries in England."

At this Mr. Thorpe laughed very heartily. "That's good! That's good, Robert!" he cried. "What do the Arminians hold? They hold all the best bishoprics—ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not my own saying," disclaimed my father hastily. "I read it in a diurnal. An Arminian, Giles," he went on in his usual courteous tones: "is one who believes, like Bishop Laud, that episcopacy is a divine institution, begun by Christ with his disciples, continued down through the practice of the Roman Catholic Church, and handed on to the Reformed Church of the present day."

Mr. Ferrand looked vexed and doubtful. "In religion," he said: "I am neither a fantastic Puritan nor a superstitious Papist, but a man who holds by Church and King."

"You believe the King can levy taxes without the consent of Parliament?" cried Mr. Thorpe.

"What else can he do if Parliament refuse to make a proper grant?" said Mr. Ferrand crossly. "It is you Puritans who want us to fight for the Protestants abroad; very well then, you must pay for it."

"Parliament did not refuse, they were dissolved before they could open their mouths," grumbled Mr. Thorpe.

"They wove out delays," contended Mr. Ferrand. "It was enough to anger any man. And the King, God bless him, is a very kingly man."

At this Mr. Thorpe snorted, and my father's gentle face grew cold.

"The greater the office, the greater the duty," he said.

"And the greater the privilege. You can't deny that, Robert Clarkson," said Mr. Ferrand more cheerfully.

"You approve of these forced loans and illegal taxes, then?" demanded my father.

Mr. Ferrand's face clouded again. "If Parliament won't grant the King money, he is driven to such expedients," he answered testily. "I tell you 'tis the fault of Parliament."

"And I suppose it's the fault of Parliament too that those who refuse these pretended gifts are thrown into prison?" went on my father.

"Not many refuse," said Mr. Ferrand.

"You are mistaken, Giles," my father told him. "There are so many noblemen and gentry in prison now that it's said the prisons are the only merry places in London."

"Talk, idle talk," said Mr. Ferrand testily.

"That's a good tale about old Lord Fairfax," put in Mr. Thorpe, laughing. We all listened attentively; for old Lord Fairfax, whose estates lay in Wharfedale nearby, was respected by my father because his family had suffered disinheritance in the old days for their revolt against their ancestors' Catholic religion, while the Ferrands admired him for his breed of horses, which were justly famous in the West Riding—Snowball, I remembered, came from the Fairfax stables. It seemed now that the old lord, being commanded by the King's Council to summon all the gentry of his division and require them to make a free gift to the King, had assembled them as ordered; but when they neither would make the gift nor dared deny it, he wrote such a skilful letter to the Council, mixing such bemoanings of hard times with such extravagant expressions of loyalty, that the Council knew not whether he meant to express refusal or submission, and so were uncertain what to do in the case. This tale of Mr. Thorpe's was the first intimation I had that taxes and such had to be paid by ordinary Yorkshire folk, and I was frightened by it.

"That's all very well," objected Mr. Ferrand, vexed at being obliged to disagree either with the King or Lord Fairfax: "But how do you expect His Majesty to carry on a war abroad without money? Tell me that."

"War!" exclaimed Mr. Thorpe. "It's neither peace nor war, as far as I can see. We declare war on these foreign lands, so that they are vexed and don't buy our cloth, but all the war we make is to send out puny expeditions under Buckingham, who does nowt as far as I can see but sit still and let his men rot."

"If they are puny, it's because Parliament will not grant any money to pay for bigger ones," shouted Mr. Ferrand, crimson. "Surely even you can see that! Cloth! Cloth! You think of nothing but your cloth and your pocket. If you thought of your trade less and England's good name more, it would be better for all of us, let me tell you, Thomas."

"Religion must take first place in all our thoughts," said my father austerely.

"Aye! It's a pity Will can't get himself a pulpit," said Mr. Ferrand with some malice. "Well, I shall pay the gift His Majesty asks for, very gladly."

"I am assessed for only ten shillings," mused Mr. Thorpe, pursing his lips thoughtfully.

"But you won't pay, Father?" burst out John.

His voice was so clear and ringing that we all looked at him. He coloured, but held firmly on. "You will not pay a tax levied without consent of Parliament, surely, Father?" he said. His dark eyes glowed, his face was stern and set; I thought he had never looked so much a man or so handsome.

Mr. Thorpe wagged his head, uncertain, and Mr. Ferrand laughed sneeringly, looking sideways at him.

"If you don't pay, Thomas, you'll find yourself in the Tower, perhaps," he said. "Or stay—since you're only assessed for a half score of shillings, you'll be sent for to London and made into a common soldier in St. Martin's Yard."

"I should like to go to London," put in Francis eagerly.

"That is not the argument," piped up little David with the saucy air he often used to Francis.

"Who said it was, scholar?" drawled Francis haughtily.

"Hold your tongue, Frank," bellowed his father, venting his own vexation on his son.

"Get your lute, Francis love," lisped Mrs. Ferrand, hurriedly.

"Aye—if you've all done we'll have some music," said Mr. Ferrand, glancing round the table at his guests and with an effort discarding his surly tone. "And no more politics. Pen, love, come and sit by me—that is, if your brother there will permit you to sit by an Arminian."

He laughed, but not very heartily; he still seemed sore at being called by this foreign-sounding name.

I went to him without more ado, so as not to embroil him again with Will, for whom, now that I understood what was troubling him, I was very sorry. It would be a bitter disappointment to him indeed if, after all his anxious study, he could find nobody to give him a title to some curacy or benefice.

As the days went by and Will still stayed at home without employment, and the delay in his marriage kept him doubly dejected, David and I grew to hate Bishop Laud, who by his tyrannous enactments kept our good honest brother so wretched, and a little vexed with Mr. Thorpe too, whose conduct, to children's eyes, seemed severe and mercenary.

Then, after a long time of trial, at last the way was made clear for Will. Mr. Okell being old began to fail somewhat, and spoke of giving up his ministry. His parishioners, who valued him highly, begged him not to do so, but to take an under-minister instead. Since Mr. Okell had a private estate as well as his benefice, he was able to do this, and he offered the place to Will, and promised to obtain him a preaching licence from the Bishop. Will, dear lad, thought this preferment was, under Providence, due to his own eloquence and learning, but I thought more likely it sprang from Mr. Okell's great affection for my father. Whichever it was, Will now with great delight settled in a house on Church Bank, and married Elizabeth Thorpe. He made a worthy minister, very industrious; his sermons winning his hearers' goodwill by a kind of honest simplicity in them.

I thought that Francis would now ride over to Will's house for his lessons, and indeed at first he did so. But after a few weeks of this he suddenly, as Will—who was glad of the fee, his stipend not being large and Eliza proving a somewhat ineffectual manager—told me regretfully, broke off from his tuition; he did not mean to be a peering scholar, said Francis, so he hanged to stupid books. I was now as distressed by his breaking off lessons as I had been once before by his continuing them, and I urged Francis not to cease from mere caprice what must be of great use to him at the University. But he only laughed, and teasingly asked me why I was so set on sending him away where I could not see him, and at last one day little David, his blue eyes vexed, asked me why I troubled myself, since Francis had never meant to be a scholar. Mr. Wilcocke, he said, had told Mr. Ferrand a long time past that his son had no aptitude for learning, and he had then given up the notion of sending him to Oxford. Then why, I objected, had Francis continued so long with Will?

"To see you, Pen; why else?" said my little brother impatiently.

I could not deny this, nor deny altogether that it was sweet to me, but I was not quite pleased by the strategem, for anything covert was abhorrent to me, and I was sorry that Francis should not go to Oxford. For what David said of this proved true enough, and Francis stayed on at home, growing from a lad into a young man, living what seemed to me a very idle life, riding about the country and professing to take care of his father's lands. His time being his own, he came much to our house, and would sit of an evening there and entertain my father, whose eyes worsened, with gossiping stories or playing on his lute. At these times I sat quiet and silent in the shadow, plying my needle; though indeed whenever I heard Francis's step my heart leaped, and at his voice my fingers trembled. Francis for his part gave me many fiery expressive glances, and many merry teasing smiles. He delighted to play love ballads to me on and sing them, and I delighted to listen. David

too was fond of music, so I often begged my love to play; it was so sweet to have Francis, and my father, and David, the three I loved best in the world, round our hearth, all peaceful and at ease, with no dissension but only friendliness between them.

THE RIFT WIDENS

FOR MR. FERRAND, alas, had not got his wish, that there should be no more politics; from that time the talk in Bradford was increasingly of politics and religion, and this made an increasing discomfort in our visits to Holroyd Hall.

The King's necessity for money was such, that he was obliged to call a Parliament again. But like all his family he was very unlucky in his public utterances, these being based on his ideas of his own importance, not on what was right. On this occasion he chose to speak very haughtily to Parliament on its opening, in a manner forgiving them for their past conduct, when most men thought it was his conduct which needed to be forgiven. He threatened to use other methods of collecting money if Parliament did not promptly supply his needs, and then bade them not regard this as a threat, since he scorned to threaten any but his equals. The matter and the manner of these remarks being equally repugnant to free Englishmen, Parliament at once became very stiff-necked and contrary, and began a long contest with the King, as to whether they should first grant money or the King first grant redress of grievances. This contest swayed back and forth, first one side gaining an advantage, and then the other; the King continually sending messages to the Parliament to hurry with his subsidies, and the Parliament as regularly replying by long petitions on the just freedoms of Englishmen. When the King saw he would get no money without granting some redress, he at length assented to one of these petitions—but too late, for the Parliament, out of patience, had now begun to attack the Duke of Buckingham, as the great source of

all the country's evils. The King could not endure a word against his favourite, and though he had secured barely sufficient money to carry on his Court, which was very expensive, and his wars, which were very unsuccessful, he dismissed the Parliament for several months, to the great anger of many of his people.

How all this was argued and canvassed between my father and Mr. Thorpe and Mr. Ferrand, I remember sadly, as a continually rising warmth and discomfort in their discussions. Friendship was never so clear between them after the day on which my father called Mr. Ferrand an Arminian. It seemed as if by doing so he had divided Mr. Ferrand from himself by putting a different mark on him, as brands are put on sheep to show that they belong to different flocks. And everything which happened, in Bradford or in great affairs of state, seemed as it were to deepen the brand, to make the difference between the two flocks, the two kinds of men, appear more clearly. In our town, as it chanced, the magistrates about this time ordered that a stop should be put to the cockfighting and gaming in the Turls on Sunday afternoons. This was in truth a good and necessary thing, for the behaviour there had grown scandalously unmannerly and an offence to decent citizens, and in other times it would have passed as such; but many who were ill-disposed to the Puritan persuasion chose to look on the order as a prim puritanical invasion of the customs of merry England. Mr. Ferrand was one of those who thought so, for he loved all games and sports and wagering; my father and Mr. Thorpe took the other side. This, though it was but a small matter in comparison with the great affairs then carrying in Parliament, being local, loomed large in Bradford minds, and made men more decided in their notions of Puritans and Arminians, Parliament and King, respectively. And so with all things, large or small; the cut of a coat, the depth of a band, no less than the conduct of the war or the predestination of the soul, or the cruel sentences of the Starchamber, seemed to be matters to be decided by political argument.

As I look back over the years I see pictures of us in those times, myself sitting a little distance away beside Mrs. Ferrand and Mrs. Thorpe, listening in growing uneasiness to the men as their voices rose, Mr. Ferrand growing loud and overbearing, Mr. Thorpe red in the face and very homely in speech, my father striking his forefinger resolutely on the table to emphasise his points, striving to make his voice heard between them. It became little pleasure for the families to be together, for we could not keep the men off politics, nor turn their discourse when they had once embarked on those topics. I had always looked forward with joyous anticipation to our family meetings, because of Francis; but now I so often returned from them distressed and uneasy that I began really to dread them, and whenever Mr. Ferrand was present I longed for the moment when the gathering should break up and each family withdraw. Too often it did so with an angry man in its midst. Next day the three would be sorry for what they had said, and when they met again would make apologies in their several fashions, my father very clearly and graciously, Mr. Thorpe in a discomfited mutter, Mr. Ferrand in a confused bellow. But as time went on and the division between them grew, they began to think each other less agreeable persons than they had previously judged. Mr. Ferrand, as I could see, began to regard his brother-in-law and my father as tiresome fanatics, sound at heart doubtless and good fellows in the main, but led astray by too much prating; while my father and Mr. Thorpe were drawn close by their joint opinion of Mr. Ferrand as a man warm-hearted doubtless but stupid, with no soul above bowls. There was as yet no open breach between them, but they did not seek each other's company as frequently as hitherto, and Mr. Ferrand especially began to go elsewhere for his talk, being often seen with the Tempests of Bolling Hall.

So it came about that I had much greater pleasure in Francis's visits to my home, than in mine to his.

One evening when Francis was sitting with us as usual, and as usual strumming on his lute, there came a sudden

thunderous knocking on the door. David ran to open it, when in rushed the Thorpes' apprentice, Lister, his red hair flying, his freckles mottling his face very disagreeably, his skin being white with excitement. He cried wildly:

"Buckingham is murdered!"

"What!" cried my father, laying down his pipe.

We all dropped silent at once and sat staring. Rapidly Lister told us the news which had just reached Bradford, that Buckingham had been stabbed at Southampton, as he made ready to take some soldiers overseas. The murderer was a fanatic, who thought he was doing his country a service.

"And so he was indeed," concluded Lister in a rapture.

"Praise be to God," cried Sarah, suddenly appearing from the kitchen with her hands uplifted: "A David has slain the Goliath of the Philistines!"

"Amen, Amen!" sang Lister. "The Lord abhorreth the blood-thirsty and deceitful man."

"Woman!" cried my father, half rising from his chair in anger: "Murder is against the law of God."

"And a direct contravention of the sixth commandment," added David.

"It might be the murderer was an instrument of God for the punishment of wickedness, Mr. Clarkson," protested Lister.

"Good cannot come of evil," said my father sternly.

"What do you know of the matter, you prating Puritans!" shouted Francis, springing to his feet. "The Duke was a great and noble lord, brave and handsome."

His voice quite broke on the last words; I glanced at him quickly, there were tears in his eyes. With a shock of alarm I saw that, as boys will with some great personage, he had made the Duke his hero.

"The murderer gave himself up and confessed, and the King will demand death by the rack, they say," went on Lister with relish.

"It is no more than he deserves," muttered Francis, turning his face from us.

I said quickly: "No man deserves the rack." I did not mean to speak thus, the words were out before I knew I had uttered them.

My father looked at me with approval.

"Your heart is too gentle, Mistress Penninah," simpered Lister.

"The Lord is known to execute judgement," said Sarah sternly. "Master Francis, do you mean to stay for supper?"

"I must go and tell the news to my father," muttered Francis sullenly, his eyelids down. (His long golden lashes, sweeping his cheek, were very dear to me.) "By your leave, Mr. Clarkson." He made for the door; Thunder, who had been lying against Tabby on the hearth, jumped up promptly.

"I can take the news to Holroyd Hall, Master Francis, if you wish not to leave Mistress Penninah," offered Lister, grinning.

He meant no harm, the simple lad, but Francis did not wish to be prevented from leaving, and he took the reference to me as an impertinence, from an apprentice; moreover, Lister's manners were ever rough and homely.

"Stand out of my way," he ordered Lister imperiously, and, as the lad moved but slowly, being awkward in his gait and not very quick in the uptake, as we say in Bradford, Francis gave him a box on the ear which sent him sprawling. Thunder barked and stood over him, and Lister scrambled up looking white and frightened.

"Francis, Francis!" my father reproved him.

And my heart too cried: "Francis, Francis!" At my father's rebuke he turned back, and made careless apologies to Lister, and a loving one to me, but when he had gone I sat down by my father in silence, sadly. I was sad because Francis had struck Lister, for any violence, or cruelty between persons, ever wounded me intolerably. I was sad that my dear love should think a man like the Duke of Buckingham

admirable; I was sad because he was wrong to do so, and also because I knew he was wrong. It was the first time I ever saw a blemish in Francis. The moment that I saw it, and knew that I still loved him, I grew, I think, though I was yet young, from a girl into a woman.

MY FATHER FALLS ILL

I COMFORTED MYSELF with hoping that the death of the Duke might heal the division between the King and his Parliament and thus between Mr. Ferrand and my father, since now the prime mover of their dissensions was gone. But in the event it proved far otherwise, evil, as my father said, never bringing forth good, but the good in an action ever bringing forth good, and the evil evil, mingled in the result as in the cause. Buckingham was gone, it was true, but the King chose Bishop Laud as his near counsellor in Buckingham's place, and thereafter the affairs of the nation steadily worsened. For while the Duke was a careless, licentious man, who cared something for honour and glory but more for luxury and ease, and was not ill disposed to any man who was not ill disposed to him, Laud was a fanatic, a man, as folk said, too fierce and cruel for his coat, too savagely contentious to wear the garb of the servants of the Prince of Peace. Under his direction, the King's Council pressed the Duke's murderer hard to say if he was instigated by the Puritans; this he denied and was not to be shaken in his denial, but many people disbelieved him.

Amongst these was Mr. Ferrand. The very next Market Day after the news of the Duke's death reached Bradford, my father suddenly stumbled into our house in the middle of the morning, looking white and shaken, and sat himself down heavily in a chair by the door. I ran to him and asked him what was wrong; he told he, gasping, that Mr. Ferrand, on a disagreement over the price of some wool, had snatched the fleece from my father's hand, saying he did not care to sell wool to a murdering Puritan.

"A murdering Puritan!" repeated my father in amazement. "He called me a murdering Puritan!"

He seemed so dazed and shaken that I coaxed him to stay at home for an hour and rest, and he fell asleep in his chair. When he awoke it was dinner time, but he could eat nothing; he pushed his trencher away irritably, and sat sideways at the table, musing.

"England is tearing herself into halves, Penninah," he said at length, shaking his head. "I pray God mend the rent."

Mr. Thorpe came in then, seeking him, and he roused himself and went back to the market.

I believe it was this shock, of Mr. Ferrand's words, which began my father's illness; certainly it was the growth of political faction which fed it.

The King, out of grief for the Duke perhaps, put off the reassembling of the Parliament till the next year, and meanwhile levied illegally such taxes and impositions as the country groaned under. Merchants were haled before the Council for not paying customs dues and the like, and one having the courage to complain that in England nowadays buyers and sellers were more screwed up than under the Turks, he was committed to prison without trial, and condemned to pay a fine quite out of proportion. This touched all merchants very nearly, and my father and Mr. Thorpe and other clothiers of Bradford spoke of it long, looking grave and shaking their heads. Then the Parliament met, and very swiftly ordered enquiries into all these violations of rights and liberties; and then, instead of granting the King the taxes as he urged them, fell to discussing that right of higher nature, the religion of the soul, which as they nobly said they preferred above all earthly things whatever. This made the King very angry, and when they began to attack his favourite Laud for his Arminianism, he instructed the Speaker of the House not to put any motion pointing at Laud, to the vote. Then the Parliament-men were bitterly angry in their turn at this invasion of their privileges, and two held the Speaker down in his place, and another locked the door of the House of Commons so that the King's

messenger could not enter, and they rapidly passed a remonstrance saying that all who brought in innovations in religion, or levied taxes without the consent of Parliament, or paid such taxes, should be reputed enemies of the King and the nation. The next Monday the King dissolved the Parliament, and it was very clear from his harsh expressions and bitter scoldings that he never meant to call another; and there were the people of England lying helpless and without defence in his hand as regards money, and for religion, in Laud's.

All this, read constantly in pamphlets and diurnals and public proclamations, and talked over almost every time two men met, roused in my father so much distress and just indignation that it wore sadly upon his health. He was often called upon to explain the rights and wrongs of these matters, the privileges of Parliament, the King's prerogative, and the like, to fellow-clothiers and merchants in Bradford, seeing he had read much and was of a just understanding. He began his explanations quietly, but soon grew shrill and tense, making his points with his forefinger with excessive emphasis, and speaking so high and fast that it quite exhausted him. Then when he read some bad news of the King's haughty behaviour, or some new arrogant rule of Bishop Laud's about altars or surplices, he would fling down the paper and stamp headlong up and down the room, shaking his head and muttering. Sometimes he paused in his stumbling stride to look at me and cry out mournfully:

"Penninah, Penninah, the hand of the Lord is heavy on us!"

He grew so thin that the bones of his body were almost visible through his flesh, and his clothes hung loose on him; his face changed greatly, his eyes seeming unduly large and his cheeks somehow fallen; his hair, now very white and scanty, straggled round his face in an untidy and negligent manner, no matter how often I smoothed and combed it. I saw that his acquaintance, even Mr. Thorpe who was such a strong Parliament man, thought his grief excessive, and he saw it too and it distressed him further.

"They do not understand what will spring from all this, Penninah," he groaned. "Arminianism is the root of popery, and unjust taxes the seed of tyranny. It's time to look about us now if our religion and our liberties are not utterly to be lost."

Often at night I heard him pacing his chamber; often, too, I heard his voice raised in prayer to God. I tried to comfort him as well as I could, but it was not easy, for if I urged him too far he was apt to glower wildly and shout at me that I cared nothing for the word of God; and then after grieve at himself because he had spoken harshly to the child of his Faith, his dearest daughter. In the foolishness of my heart I was glad when the Parliament was dissolved, for I thought that now at least there would be no more debates and speeches to provoke him.

But as soon as he lacked that excitement he fell into a melancholy. He had another trouble to vex him, my poor father, of which I had then no knowledge. The first hint of it I received was over David.

David by this time was set to be a scholar, and he had the gentle lofty look and dreamy gait I have often noted in those that love learning. He was now reading Latin poetry, Vergil and Horace, and could himself make excellent Latin verses. In this he quite outstripped my poor capacities, for which, dear lad, he was truly sorry, spending many earnest hours explaining dactyls and spondees and the like to me, until at last I kissed his forehead and told him my greatest pride and pleasure was to see him excel me, when he regretfully desisted. A short while after the dissolution of the Parliament, though he was still but a child in years he began to speak with a great eagerness of Cambridge, where it seemed Mr. Wilcocke had been at the University; and then one day Mr. Wilcocke came to beg my father that David should be allowed to prepare himself to go thither, since he was the most promising pupil Bradford School had ever had. My father was delighted by this praise, but hesitated somewhat on the ground of expenses; Mr. Thorpe too, whom he consulted, seemed to doubt of

it. But I pleaded with my father for David's wish, and John to whom I spoke of it took the pains to visit Mr. Wilcocke and came back with particulars of how it might most cheaply be done, and he urged these upon Mr. Thorpe, and finally they both consented. I was obliged to John, but a little grieved that Mr. Thorpe should have so large a say in our affairs, and I spoke in this sense that night to my father.

He sighed and said nothing, but after a little roused himself and went up into the loom-chamber, where I heard him rustling papers and pacing with heavy steps. It came to be bedtime, and David and I went in to him to bid him good night; he kissed us very tenderly, seeming heavy in spirit, and said in a mournful tone:

"I fear I have proved but a poor father to you, my children."

This was so contrary to all truth that David and I made sport of it, laughing and caressing him, and under our joking his face cleared.

But when I was alone in my room, I lay awake a long time, distressed for my father, for the change in him and the trouble he seemed to be in. After a long while I heard his voice raised in prayer, and then a broken sound at which I started up abruptly, for it was weeping. I threw on a gown and went to him, and found him still dressed and sitting at his papers. There were tears on his cheeks, and my heart bled for him; I put my arms about his neck and kissed and soothed him, and begged him to tell me what was his trouble. After some coaxing he told me, hesitating, that it was his accounts, which were not in order as they should be, the morrow being Market Day. Child that I was, I did not penetrate his true meaning, but supposed he spoke merely of letters and characters, the late failing of his eyes giving colour to that supposition.

"John would cast up your accounts if you asked him, Father," I said eagerly. "He keeps all Mr. Thorpe's accounts, and pays his bills. I have seen his accounts, they are very neat and orderly. John would help you."

I continued to plead and to urge, longing to cure his trouble and make him happy as he used to be, and at last my father gave me a very sweet look, smiling, and laid his hand on my arm and said:

"We will ask John, then, since you wish it, Penninah."

I was pleased at his yielding, and I coaxed him to bed and gave him a hot spiced drink, and went back to my chamber feeling easier.

My father slept late next morning and I did not disturb him; though I rose early myself in order to get a message to John. At that time Mr. Thorpe's lameness of foot, due to a sciatica, was beginning to trouble him, and John often came to market of a Thursday in his father's place. The Market Cross, round which most of the clothiers gathered, was just a few yards down the hill from our house, and I meant to send Sarah out to find him. But as it chanced I did not need to do so, for the apprentice Lister came in early with a gift of eggs from Mrs. Thorpe. I gave him the message, which it seems he took over-eagerly, for in ten minutes John stood before me breathless, having broken off his business to come immediately to me. I was sorry for this and said so; John said it was no matter, and looked at me expectantly.

In early life, when young folk are growing, a difference of a few years in age seems a very great one, and John, who was barely five years older than me, then seemed a grown man, very steady and sober and settled, compared with myself or Francis. He was still short and sturdy in stature—Francis far overtopped him—dark and plain in visage and rather sombre in manner. He did not smile easily, and was not given to many words; he cared nothing for musical instruments or poetry, and abominated facetious jests such as his father and Mr. Ferrand delighted in. But he was already known as an honest, trustworthy merchant and a skilled clothier. The Thorpe cloths were always of proper width and woven of well-seasoned wool; I have seen John feel a cloth between his fingers, not looking at it, and with a blunt scornful air declare promptly what was

wrong. He knew his own mind, made few promises but kept them, and always meant just what he said; I sometimes thought he was a little chafed by the rule of his father, whose notions, whether of cloth or of godliness, were not as lofty as his son's, but he gave him a strict and perfect obedience. I trusted John, and did not hesitate to tell him fully what was in my mind, and ask him to cast the week's accounts for my father.

John looked grave.

"This is not an easy thing, Penninah," he said. "It is an invasion of your father's private business, which no man suffers gladly." Seeing that I did not take his meaning, he explained: "If I do this I shall know all your father's moneys, his stocks of wool and cloth, the merchants to whom he sells, just as I know my father's."

"My father has no son to help him," I murmured, somewhat at a loss.

John's eyes flashed. "I should be very glad to be a son to your father," he said promptly.

There was a warmth in his tone the significance of which I did not then catch; I took his words simply for acceptance of the task I offered him, and as I thought I heard my father stirring, I proposed we should go up together to him.

"I think it better I should go alone," said John after a moment's thought.

He came down after a little to say that my father was not well enough to go to market; he himself would do his business for him, and return that night to give an account of it.

All this he did, and was closeted for a long while that night in the loom-chamber with my father. The length of their discussion, and the sound of their voices rising and falling, John's ever seeming to question and my father's to answer, made me uneasy; and indeed when they at last came down to supper John looked grave and my father tired and troubled. Next day my father bade me be a little stricter in the housekeeping; there had been much adversity in the cloth trade of late, he said, what with wars abroad and political dissensions at home, and the plague, it seemed,

hanging about the country; his accounts had grown a little confused, and now John had put them in order he saw that we should need to be careful for a while. I gladly assented; if this were all that troubled him, I thought, we should soon make him well again, for Sarah was very honest and loved us all though she had a queer harsh way of showing it, and it was easy for me to be frugal since my heart was not set on outward shows or luxuries. We all agreed that David, being young and growing, should not know any curtailment.

To cut down our expenses was easy, and John, coming every week on the eve of Market Day to cast our accounts, gave me praise for our retrenchment which I scarcely deserved, but it was not so easy to cure my father, whose melancholy grew every day upon him. Bishop Laud continually gave orders about communion tables, candles, saints, and so on, which to my father appeared pure papistry, but instead of exciting him as of old, these served merely to depress him, now that there was no Parliament sitting to take the lead in resistance. When it was ordained by those in authority that the afternoon exercises in church should be no longer sermons, but consist only of catechism out of the Prayer Book, he seemed to despair of religion and freedom.

"It is the death of all pious learning," he muttered dejectedly, his head on his breast.

"Aye, if it be observed," said John. "But it won't be observed in Bradford."

His staunch steady tone gave my father some comfort, and his face brightened, only to slip back, when John had gone, into its now customary look of wistful sadness.

FRANCIS APES THE SOLDIER

IT WAS INDEED a sad time for me, for beside the grief of my father's slow decay, I had another trouble.

As peace was shortly made with Spain, though I think more for lack of supplies on our King's part than for any result accruing to the war, certain of our armies returned from those ill-fated expeditions of Buckingham's abroad about which Parliament and all honest men had complained so bitterly. Amongst these returning soldiers came a young man, a cousin or some connection of the Tempests of Bolling Hall. He had learned much beside soldiering, on the continent and in London, and was a very fine gentleman, using great licence in clothes, in drink, in gaming, and, as I understand now, with women. Our young gentry round Bradford had a desire to ape him, and be as like soldiers as they could; and as Bolling Hall was but a mile or two from Little Holroyd and Mr. Ferrand was friendly there, Francis got into the acquaintance of this young Tempest, and soon fell into the same courses. My first intimation of this was that he began to swagger to me a good deal about his fine friends. I not knowing the harm of it encouraged him by listening and smiling—it cheered my father to hear his bright lively talk. His tales grew wilder, and began to contain matters that I was ashamed to listen to; my cheek burned and I bent more closely over my needle. It was my poor father's growing infirmity gave Francis the opportunity for this kind of talk, for he was apt in an evening to drop off to sleep suddenly in the middle of a sentence, and on waking a few minutes later be ignorant that he had slept. For my part I knew not whether it was less maidenly to speak or be silent when my love told these wild tales. At last one night

when he was flushed and loud and laughing continually over his lewd jests I could bear it no longer; I rose up quietly and gathered my needlework together and went towards the stairs. Francis, his face changed, sprang after me and seized me by the waist.

"Penninah!" he said, urgently, but in a whisper so as not to wake my father.

"I can't stay with you while your talk is so ungodly," I told him, trembling.

"Puritan!" murmured Francis with a teasing smile.

He bent his handsome head and kissed my lips. His breath smelt of wine, and his kisses seemed lecherous; his hand sought my breast caressingly. At this touch my whole soul took fright; I cried "No! No!" and sprang from him, panting. My father stirred and muttered my name drowsily, and we stood very still for a moment till he should sleep again.

"Why are you so cold to me, Pen?" Francis then murmured reproachfully.

"I am not cold to you, Frank," I told him, the tears thick in my eyes. "I love you wholly."

He seemed pleased at this, threw up his head and smiled and swung his shoulders.

"But I cannot endure you when you are gross and wanton," I continued, my voice shaking. "I have not deserved it of you, Francis, that you should treat me so. My father has not deserved it. If we are not rich like the Tempests, we are decent honest people."

By this time my sobs had gained upon me so that I could keep them down no longer; I burst into tumultuous weeping and ran upstairs. My last glimpse of Francis as I fled showed him hurt and very sorry, with the kind sweet look on his face he used to have as a boy.

Next day he came to me with a jewel in his hand as a present for me, whereat I was very angry. He seemed astonished that I refused it, which vexed me still further; I scolded him roundly for daring to think he could buy my favour, but at last could not help smiling, he looked so

hangdog. He revived at once beneath my smile, sprang to me and kissed me very sweetly, and begged me, calling me his dearest love and such fond terms, to forgive him. Ah, how glad I was to do so!

We were very happy that evening, I at my needle, Francis sitting quietly at our fireside opposite my father, our Tabby and his dog Thunder, both now growing somewhat old and heavy, lying friendly between them.

"It's good to be here, Pen," murmured Francis when my father slept. He sighed with a kind of relief and comfort, and repeated: "Quietly here with you, Pen."

Whenever I raised my head I found his eyes fixed on me in a bright sweet look of love.

"I have copied a piece of poetry for you, Pen," he said presently.

He fumbled in his pocket, and brought out a piece of paper, dirty and crumpled.

"Three mains, Dick's Red, two o'clock Saturday," I read.

"No, no!" cried Francis, laughing and colouring. "That's a cockfight. Turn it over."

I turned it; in his large round schoolboyish hand, much misspelt, I read:

*O thou art fairer than the evening sky
Glad in the beauty of a thousand stars*

"It is for thee, Pen," whispered Francis, suddenly kneeling beside me. "With thy starry eyes and dusky hair. I copied it from a playbook Dick Tempest has. Dick has seen many plays," he added somewhat wistfully, "in London."

Yes, that evening I was very happy.

For a few days he came thus every evening, and everything was right between us; then suddenly he came no more for a week, and when at last he did appear, he was flushed with wine again and loud and talkative. I was so overjoyed to see him that I ran to him when he plied his rhythmical knock, crying "Oh, it has been so long since you came, Francis!" forgetting that such behaviour was

not maidenly. He soon put me in mind of that, however, by saying with a jaunty air:

"If you were kinder to me, Pen, I would come more often."

"How could I be kinder to you, Frank?" I wondered.

His laugh, and the look in his eyes, told me partly what he meant, though I was yet too young and innocent to understand him fully. I was angered and drew back, whereupon he begged me to forgive him.

So we went on; some days he told me most lovingly that it was good to be with me, some days he neglected me utterly, and when he returned told me again that if I were kinder to him he would come more often. I grew to hate this saying; at first my pride would not give me leave to answer it, but at last, goaded beyond endurance, I told him quietly but plainly that the way to my kindness was through an honourable marriage. At this Francis frowned and stood first on one foot then on the other, and at last muttered that his father was against the match because of the rift of opinion between him and my father.

"If you do not intend marriage, Francis," said I in the quietest tone I could command, "let us part now and see each other no more."

"Of course I intend marriage, Pen!" said Francis peevishly. "But I am waiting a good time to speak to my father."

I accepted his assurance and strove to be content.

But Francis was ever one to dislike trouble, to put off and delay what would be irksome in the doing. So he did not speak to Mr. Ferrand. Although I never asked whether he had spoken, and he knew I would never ask, yet he was ashamed to come to me with that word unspoken, and therefore he came to Fairgap less often. Yet when he came, our time together was sweet to both of us, and I never doubted I was his true love and we should one day dash aside all hindrances and marry, only I thought it a little hard that he was not kinder just now, seeing I was in such distress about my father.

I AM ASKED IN MARRIAGE

FOR THE VIGOUR of my poor father's mind now sank a little every day under the melancholy that oppressed him.

Gradually it came that he went abroad little, and took no pleasure in either reading or conversation because of the sudden sleep which weighed on him; he sat long hours in his chair by the fire, silent and brooding. Sometimes he would rouse up and be very busy sorting wools in his spectacles, or sit at the loom, panting a little as he laboured at the treadles. But he made little progress at the piece, which stayed on the loom for weeks; at last John, perceiving this one evening, sat himself at the loom and as it were by chance, while talking, began to weave, and the next evening did the same, and the next, and so on, till the piece was finished. John sent it away to a distant market—for it was ill woven—and sold it for a low price, lest my father's reputation should suffer for it.

Then my father began to set up the warp for a new piece. But he found the task too difficult for him; he often came to the stairhead and called: "Penninah! Penninah!" in a loud shouting voice, and when I ran up I found the threads all in a tangle. (Once he called: "Faith! Faith!" and at that my heart was nearly broken.) I tried my best to set the threads in order, but not being trained to the trade I made but a poor success of it, and my father was very impatient. At length he understood he could never complete the warping, and this I could see was a very severe blow to him. The next time John came in my father asked him, in a somewhat lofty and careless tone, if he would set it straight. John spent many long hours over the business; the threads were so muddled, he said to me,

that it was almost impossible to bring order into them, and since the piece would be of little value when woven, why should my father trouble about it. But I begged him urgently to continue, and he did so, and at last had it all straight, and called my father upstairs to see it, gladly. But alas, my father no longer cared about the piece; he dismissed it peevishly, and made light of John's services. John looked disappointed, and I was grieved for his sake.

"To-morrow he may take great delight in it," I said to John as I bade him farewell at the door, speaking softly so as not to disturb my father.

John looked at me a moment, smiling strangely; then he took my face between his hands and kissed my forehead. He said:

"Thou hast a very gentle heart, Penninah."

Then he clapped on his hat and strode away, not once looking back.

Sure enough next morning my father rose up early, and sat at his loom looking blithe and busy. So contented did he seem that my sad heart lifted, and I began to think he might quite recover. It was Market Day, and Lister came in with a message that if it pleased Mistress Penninah, Mr. Thorpe would like to dine with us. When Mr. Thorpe limped in, my father greeted him so heartily, and seemed so like himself, as to rejoice me still further, and when I left them alone after the meal, I could hear them talking very briskly together. I sang with pleasure, and wished it were to-morrow, when I might see Francis.

When Mr. Thorpe had gone, my father called me in; with a bright and cheerful look he drew me to him, and said:

"I have some good news for thee, Penninah."

"What is it, father?" I asked, happy in his happiness.

Then he told me that Mr. Thorpe had proposed a marriage treaty between myself and John.

This was a very bitter moment for me.

Not that I doubted what my answer ought to be, or feared my father would compel me against my will. But

it was bitter that Francis by mere carelessness should have cast two people whom he professed to love, into this position. I hated to give the pain of refusal to John, who had stood friend to us in my father's trouble with such exemplary steadiness and affection; I hated to appear harsh and ungracious in my refusal, yet perforce did so, since I could not give a reason for it. Perhaps I was too proud, but I could not bring myself to say my heart was given elsewhere until Francis showed that there was cause for the gift.

Nor did the bitterness pass for me with the moment. My father was grievously disappointed by my refusal, which indeed he declined to communicate immediately to the Thorpes, saying that a young maid needed time to make up her mind; in the meantime he urged me more than I would have believed possible in a man of his gentleness, to change it for a favourable answer. Strangely enough, his eagerness in the business seemed to excite him back into something of his old spirit, and he constantly extolled John to me, with much shrewdness, in the terms best suited to my disposition, for he dwelt not so much on his steadiness and honesty as on a certain greatness in his heart.

"There's no need, father," I told him at last. "I know John's qualities as thoroughly as you."

"Then why, Penninah," he began.

I interrupted him. "Because I do not love John as you loved my mother," I said.

This gave him pause, and he said: "Well, I will not press you, child." But his sigh and his sad look were a pressure on my heart stronger than his words.

Nor was my father's the only urging I had to suffer. I wished that Will should not hear of the matter, and my father meant to humour me in this, but let it slip out by chance one day, without intention. As soon as he understood what was toward, Will flushed up in one of his sudden warm vexations, and shouted at me for not knowing my duty, seeming to take it as an insult to himself that I rejected his wife's brother. He grew calmer before he left, and agreed with my father that I should not be pressed into an unwanted

marriage, but every time he came to Fairgap he entered our house with a hopeful questioning air which turned into a frown and a wordy argument when he saw by my face that I had not relented. Sarah, too, clattering her pans bad-temperedly, grumbled many times a day that every one knew I should marry Master Thorpe in the long run, so why this affectation of coyness? It was ungodly, said Sarah, it was against good sense; it did not become the child of a decent God-fearing man to behave like a horse-leech's daughter. Even David, looking up from his books one evening when I was by, suddenly threw his arms round my waist, buried his face in my breast and cried out that he wanted me to marry nobody, nobody, but if it had to be somebody it had best be John. Only John did not urge me, but merely turned on me, whenever he came to our house, a deep look of question from his brown eyes, which grew more sombre as the days went on. For my part, I urged my father continually to give the Thorpes a decisive refusal, which he, shaking his head obstinately and muttering, as continually deferred.

It chanced that just then I saw little of Francis, for it was one of those times when we had quarrelled because I was not kinder to him, and when he came in one night again, smiling and handsome and debonair and eager for kisses as before, I did not tell him of the proposed marriage. Whether this was because I could not bring myself to betray John's love to his laughter, or because I could not for shame seem to press marriage with myself on him again, or because of his lascivious mood, I do not know; all three perhaps.

At last one quiet Sunday afternoon there was a great clatter of hoofs outside our Fairgap windows, through the noise of which came John's steady knock. When Sarah opened there was Mrs. Thorpe, who had come pillion behind her son, descending in massive dignity from one of The Breck horses, John helping her, while Mr. Thorpe, groaning about his lame foot, was gingerly dismounting by the aid of Lister's shoulder from the other. Sarah brought

the Thorpes in, and they disposed themselves about the house-room with ceremony, John standing stiffly between his parents. My father, who had been asleep by the fire, awoke, and tottered towards them with something of embarrassment in his greeting.

"We have come," announced Mrs. Thorpe as soon as she was settled, "to conclude this matter of the marriage treaty. There has been an overlong delay."

"Aye," agreed her husband, nodding.

"It is hard," continued Mrs. Thorpe in a very meaning tone, "that Mr. Thorpe's condescension should be so ill rewarded."

"Condescension!" I exclaimed, my cheeks aflame.

"There is to be no word of that, Mother," said John. His voice was quiet, but Mrs. Thorpe, staring at him, was silent, though her lips moved as if she could hardly keep herself from speech. Mr. Thorpe coughed uneasily.

"It is not easy for a young maid to make up her mind," mumbled my father.

"Oh, Father, how can you be so false!" I cried. "I have begged you for long enough to take Mr. Thorpe my refusal—I am very sensible of the honour," I went on in a low confused tone, "but I am afraid I must decline it."

There was a silence.

"Bethink you, Penninah," said Mrs. Thorpe very grimly: "how you will feel when John marries elsewhere. Think of that before it is too late."

"I shall never marry elsewhere," said John.

"Nonsense," said his father uncomfortably.

John's face was very stern and set, and I remembered with a sinking heart that he always meant exactly what he said.

"Oh, John," I murmured. I put my hand to my eyes and bowed my head in misery. "I cannot, indeed I cannot. I wish I could."

There was another long silence. Then all the Thorpes began to speak at once.

"Let us go," said John.

"I'm disappointed in you, Pen," said Mr. Thorpe.

"Since your daughter has so many scruples, Robert Clarkson," concluded Mrs. Thorpe drily, rising: "it is best to let the affair slide off. Let no more word be spoken about it, either between us or outside."

"It shall be secret between us," agreed my father sadly. "But perhaps Penninah will change her mind."

"It will be too late," said Mrs. Thorpe, sweeping towards the door.

"It will never be too late," said John. "Mind what I say, Penninah. It will never be too late."

He stood with his hand on the latch and gave me a last steady look, then followed his parents.

I LEARN MY MIND

WE NOW ENTERED upon the year 1633, a year I never shall forget, a year so fraught with events of consequence to me and mine that even now, forty years after, a mention of its name sets the strings of my heart quivering. Its happenings crowded upon each other's heels; I see them all in swift flashing pictures, bright gold or sombre purple, and still throbbing with emotion.

The spring season that year was very pleasant and full of sunshine; in its brightness I took heart, and began to indulge in sweet dreams of marriage with my love. Sometimes I wove speeches to myself which I pretended I should make to Mr. Ferrand, explaining how Francis was spoiling himself with the Tempests, and how if I were his wife I would take care of him and keep him always happy and good; and sometimes I invented speeches for Mr. Ferrand too, in which he called me his pretty penny, as he used, and agreed smiling to our marriage. I was a little encouraged in these fond dreams at first by the turn of public affairs that spring. King Charles set out to go to Scotland to be crowned there, passing through Yorkshire on his way, and all the nobility and gentry exerted themselves to do him honour. Such furbishings of armour, training of horses, tailoring of new clothes, re-furnishings of houses and the like went on round Pomfret and York and Ripon as had not been heard of in our county for many a long year; the report of them coming into our clothing towns excited the people, and gave all but the strictest Puritans a pleasant friendly feeling towards our King. Perhaps after all, folk thought, he was not so black as he was painted, and we all had a wish that Yorkshire should

proffer him a generous hospitality and show well in his eyes.

The great landowners of the North summoned—or perhaps I should say invited, I do not know the law of the matter—their tenants to attend them in the escort they were giving to the King; and as Mr. Ferrand was for part of his land a tenant of Sir William Savile, who was a great man at court, Francis went off to York with a new horse and a mounted serving man and a great quantity of new clothes, very joyously. He came to Fairgap on his way, though it was not in his way at all, to bid me good-bye and show himself to me; he was flushed and laughing and excited, and indeed made a fine handsome picture, with his bright hair and laughing eyes and smooth warm cheek, wheeling his horse about and making it curvet, for he was ever a dashing and accomplished rider. I was proud to see him go on such a high errand, looking so debonair and gallant, and glad that he should have some occupation, to wipe the idle discontented look he had been wearing lately, from his face. My father too came out to say farewell to him, and stood in the doorway smiling and nodding, and many of our neighbours clustered round. Francis drank in their interest, taking it for pure admiration though in truth it had a little sourness, with an eagerness which did not quite please me, though I told myself it was natural and boyish; he showed them the new harness his horse wore, and the feather in his hat, while I was longing till my heart almost burst with it that they should all go away and leave Francis and me to make our farewells alone. But suddenly Francis seemed to tire of the crowd, or think it did not become his dignity, for crying abruptly: "Farewell, Pen!" he wheeled his horse and rode off at once down the street, and there was nothing left to do but go indoors.

The house seemed dark and quiet and melancholy, and my father, who had tired himself with standing, was fretful and peevish, and my heart ached that I should have parted from my love without one tender word, without one kiss. In my mind I followed him, galloping along the sunny

roads to York, the trees in their fresh spring green, and frisking lambs, and hawthorn in bud, and daisies in the fields, beside him all the way, to delight him; and I saw York as very fine and throng, full of richly dressed ladies and gentlemen walking up and down the cathedral and admiring Francis. He will forget me, I thought, and I wept secretly. That evening John came in to sit with my father, for the first time since I had declined the Thorpes' marriage treaty; he gave me a sober searching look, and I fear he saw the redness of my eyes, though he said nothing of it.

While Francis was away, their first child was born to Will and Eliza. Will's delight over his little daughter was a pleasure to see, and the infant, being grandchild to both the Thorpes and my father, drew our families nearer again after their recent coolness and distance. I kept myself as much as I could in the background, so as not to intrude a remembrance which might mar this renewal of friendship; but I need not have troubled myself, for a newborn babe supersedes all other interests in its parents' and grandparents' hearts, and the affairs of John and myself were for the time forgotten, except by ourselves. Little Martha, as she was called after Mrs. Thorpe, was a sweet little dear, though somewhat sickly, and in helping Eliza to tend her I passed away the time of the absence of Francis.

Francis was not gone very long, since the English nobles escorted the King only to the Border, where the duty was taken over by the nobles of Scotland; but though he came back to Bradford in a few weeks, his brief absence had changed him—or rather, perhaps not changed, but increased all those inclinations in him which most distressed me. He was more the fine gentleman than ever. To do him justice, his fine manners seemed to sit on him more naturally, as if he were more used to using them, but there was less sincerity in him than before. He paid compliments with a careless graceful ease, as if they were the merest talk and he did not expect them to be believed; I found this a poor exchange for his former sweet teasing. He had been home

three days before he came to see me, but when he came said he had returned to Bradford only for my sake, there was nothing else worth coming for. In general he seemed impatient and restless and critical, with an air of finding himself too good for his company, which, though I supposed it the customary way of courtiers, hurt me sorely. He talked much of the King, and Sir William Savile, and the Earl of Newcastle, in a boyish boasting way, but was never able to answer the questions my father put to him, about the Court's politics and religion; also he seemed never even to have seen, or at least noticed, Bishop Laud. My father could not believe this last, and returned over and over again to the question of Laud's look and air, till Francis was flushed and vexed with denials. Indeed my father's company was not very cheerful nowadays, and I was scarcely surprised, though sick at heart, when Francis began that summer again to drink and gamble with the Tempests instead of coming often to Fairgap.

So how the King went on in his journey I never very clearly knew, save that his behaviour in Scotland then was the foundation of all our later troubles with that country. We made out from the diurnals that Laud tried to force on Scotland the same church rules he was trying to cram down the English throat; it seemed he carried himself so high at the King's Coronation in Edinburgh as actually to thrust aside from the throne some Scottish Bishop because he was not wearing his whites, as they called surplices in those days. But the Scots were a stubborn folk and very pious, and I think they did not yield much of what was wanted, for the King came very quickly back home from them to London. Then there happened an event most disastrous for our family, as for England, for the Archbishop of Canterbury died, and Laud had his place at the head of the Church.

We soon felt the weight of his hand, in Bradford. Mr. Okell came into our house one autumn evening, leaning on Will's arm, wearing a very grave face; Will looked warm and excited, and was carrying some sort of an official

paper. It seemed the King, on Laud's instigation, had ordered every clergyman in England to read from the pulpit a declaration called the Book of Sports, and it was a copy of this Will held in his hand. My father bade me read it to him, and though Will pouted a little, wishing to read it himself, I knew my father could hear my voice, and understand it, more easily than that of other folk, so I took the paper and read it aloud. It commanded that after church on Sundays everyone should be allowed to indulge in lawful recreations, such as dancing and archery and vaulting; and it scolded the Puritans roundly for having tried to prohibit them. In some dioceses, explained Mr. Okell when I had finished, the Bishops were demanding from each parish a certificate that this proclamation had been duly read, signed by the churchwardens.

"I will never sign such a certificate!" cried my father feverishly, his poor old head nodding.

"I shall not read the proclamation. I believe it to be against the law of God," said Mr. Okell.

"It is a desecration of the Sabbath!" cried Will warmly.

I could not help remembering how Christ had said the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath; moreover, in the Book of Sports itself there were some phrases, explaining how the labouring sort of men had only Sundays on which to refresh their spirits, which seemed to me very just and of a kindly intention. Yet, man's whole duty on earth, and surely his highest pleasure, should be the service of God, and it seemed little enough to give Him one day out of seven. So I remained perplexed and doubtful on this matter.

Although the Book of Sports was not read in our church, other pulpits nearby published it, and its tenor became generally known in Bradford, and fanned all the bitter dissensions there, which had been a little fading, into life again. Mr. Ferrand and those of his party were highly pleased; they laughed heartily at the stricter people's discomfiture, and encouraged the townsfolk to dance and enjoy themselves on Sundays, so that the Turls were once

again full of men cockfighting and gaming and shouting. By way of answer to this, those of the Puritan persuasion kept Sunday more strictly than before; they would not eat cooked meats that day, or read, or indulge in any recreation or visiting, but devoted the Lord's Day wholly to His service, in fasting and preaching and prayer.

This made our Fairgap very quiet on Sundays, most of our neighbours being Puritans, and caused Sarah and David to look askance at Francis if he came in on that day; for with his spirited horse and his bright clothes and his lively laughter he seemed a noisy disturbance, almost a breach of the peace. On such occasions Sarah would try to hush him down, and David sat in a corner with a frown above his gentle eyes and his rosy mouth puckered. But I could not bring myself to drive Francis away by scolding him. I judged that it was far more pleasing to God that he should be with us than with the Tempests, and if my father did not see fit to rebuke him, I did not feel called upon to do so. But this last, I knew, was an evasion, for my poor father's mind wandered so, he was often uncertain which day of the week we were at.

One Lord's Day afternoon when Francis came thus to us, he brought his lute, and sat lightly strumming on it, while my father drowsed in his chair by the hearth. It was the day of the first autumn frost, so that the brightly leaping fire was very agreeable. After a time Francis began to play an old ballad, *There is a Garden in her Face*, and sang it softly, fixing his eyes in a fiery glance on me the while. It seemed to me that, in the pause between the verses, I heard a kind of murmur of voices outside the house; I felt vaguely troubled and uneasy, but put that aside for the pleasure of listening to Francis. Then suddenly the voices swelled to a shout as the house door was thrown open. Will and John stood on the threshold, both looking extremely vexed; Eliza, carrying the baby, came next, looking down her nose with a virtuous disapproving air; behind them loomed a crowd of prim and angry-looking faces.

"Francis Ferrand," cried Will warmly, "will you cease this unruly behaviour, this ungodly desecration of the Sabbath?"

Francis, without stirring from his chair, lazily rolled his head round and raised his thick fair eyebrows in a look of mock astonishment. "What desecration, pray?" he drawled. Will, pursing his lips, shot out his finger and pointed accusingly at the lute. "What harm is there in sweet music?" drawled Francis, plucking a descending chord from the strings.

"You are making Penninah's house a scandal," said John.

Francis's face changed, and he sprang to his feet.

"Why, you prick-eared prating Puritan!" he shouted: "What is Pen's house to you?"

At this John's face quivered with rage, and he suddenly raised his fist and brought it down full on the lute in his cousin's hand. The frame broke, and the strings twanged piercingly and rent. Francis gave a cry of fury and sprang at him, striking him on the mouth. Then they fought savagely, knocking down the chairs, and falling to the ground, rolled over and over. They were not now boys, but men, and they used their full strength, striking hard and viciously at each other's faces. Francis had the greater skill, I saw as if in a dream, John was the stronger. The neighbours recoiled and shouted for the Constable, Eliza wept, Will with some courage strove vehemently to separate them, following them as they moved and receiving not a few blows in the process. David threw himself in front of my father's chair, for the poor old man, so suddenly and alarmingly awakened, was unable to stir, but sat still and trembled. For my part I stood numb with anguish, my hands to my heart.

At length the two were dragged apart and held back from each other, breathing heavily and glaring, and Will seized John's arm and urged him out of the house and down towards Kirkgate. My father staggered to his feet, and waved the crowd away with a shaking hand; from respect to him they withdrew, though somewhat dis-

contented and muttering. Francis, his doublet torn, a deep jagged scratch on his arm, a heavy bruise on his forehead, leaned against the table, panting, and hurled insults after them, till David slipped across and closed the door. Then at last I found my voice and my power of movement.

"You are hurt, Francis," I whispered, going to him.

He brushed back his hair and looked down at his arm, from which blood was welling.

"I can't deny it," he said in a vexed tone, and began to curse softly.

I took him into the kitchen, and sat him by the hearth and took off his doublet, and fetched towels and water, and began to bathe his injuries. Although I was so much distressed I could hardly stand, I could not but rejoice to take my lover's face between my hands and minister to him, to turn his strong white arm over and bathe it gently.

"Thy hands are the softest in England, Pen," murmured Francis. He turned to me and put his arms round my waist as if he were a child, like David, and I bent over him and cradled his head on my breast and spoke words of love to him.

"I fear Mr. Ferrand will be grieved over this," I murmured presently.

Francis laughed. "Aye, that he will," he said. "Especially since he forbade me this house long ago, after the murder of Buckingham."

"He forbade you to come here?" I cried. "Oh, Francis!"

My father's voice cried out suddenly behind me: "If your father has forbidden you to come here, Francis Ferrand, leave my house and do not enter it again without his permission. Do me the favour to tell him I did not know of his prohibition."

He was standing in the doorway, leaning heavily on his stick but otherwise looking strong and well, as he used, with a spark in his eye and a flush on his face. David stood beside him.

"Why, Mr. Clarkson!" protested Francis.

"Go now, go now!" cried my father, and he struck his stick angrily on the ground. "Leave my house. Go now."

Francis shook back his hair, snatched up his doublet and sauntered away coolly.

"I have been dull in this matter, Penninah," went on my father. "I see it is Francis you love. I thought that was over long ago and John was your choice for a husband."

I wept without speaking.

"Why do you weep for Francis, Pen?" said David, in a quick hard tone. "He is not worthy of you."

"I fear indeed there are some personal vices and licences in Frank's life," agreed my father. His voice began to droop and quaver, till it no longer held its former strength but sank to its customary frailness. "Yet there is a kind of brightness and glory in him. But Giles Ferrand . . . And John . . ." He broke off, and shook his head sadly. "I could wish to see you safely married, Pen," he quavered, "before I leave you."

"Don't speak of leaving us, Father," I murmured.

He shook his old head again sorrowfully, and stumbled back to his chair, David helping him.

In a moment or two David came back to the kitchen, where I in a daze was tidying away the water and towels.

"There is someone to see you, Pen," he said.

Hoping he meant Francis, I turned to the door eagerly. John stood there. He was a sorry spectacle; his mouth looked torn and inflamed, his nose bruised and swollen.

"I have come to say I am sorry, Penninah," he said.

"Well, you have said it," I answered him, my voice trembling with anger.

"You are angry with me, Penninah," he went on in his stiff steady tone, "and rightly. I was in the wrong."

"Yes, you were in the wrong," I told him.

"Aye! It is wrong to mingle a private grudge with a public duty," said John.

"A private grudge? What grudge have you against your own cousin?" I wondered.

John gave me a steady look. "I am of a very jealous disposition, Penninah," he said drily.

Such a mingling of feelings raged in my heart just then that I was almost distracted. However little a woman may care for a man, she cannot be unaffected when she learns he loves her strongly enough to be shaken from his ordinary courses for her sake. I was deeply angry with John, sorry for him because I could not love him and yet exasperated with him for ever thinking I could do so, grateful to him for his kindness to my father; I respected him for his honesty and goodness and at the same time detested him for having these qualities which Francis lacked. I was angry with Francis, to whose light delays and deceptions all this trouble was attributable, yet full of a searing love for him. In a kind of despairing impotence between the two of them I stood before John in silence, my breath coming unevenly; and in a moment he gave me a short clumsy bow, and left me.

All that week I waited for Francis. I had to suffer some scoldings from Will and some coolness from the neighbours, on the subject of the unseemly disturbance at our house on Lord's Day, but I took it all very quietly, for indeed I scarcely heard it; I was waiting for Francis. Every minute, every hour, I waited for him. Every footfall I heard in Fairgap I thought might be his; every horse's hoof might herald his coming. At every sound which came near our door I broke off from my work about the house, sweeping or sewing, and raised my head, and listened, waiting. The footfall approached, I smiled with hope—then it passed, dying away in the distance, and I returned to my broom or my needle. On Thursday, I made sure Francis would come, and fondly tricked myself into believing he would bring Mr. Ferrand with him. In the afternoon my father roused himself and went down to the Cross. David was at school, Sarah was baking in the kitchen, so I was alone. I sat myself down at my tapestry frame and tried to occupy myself with it. After a while I could bear it no longer; I rose and paced the room, gazing at the door every time

I turned. Francis did not come. Then sick with longing I went to the door jamb and leaned against it, listening and waiting, and stayed thus, silent and motionless, while the fire sank and the autumn day waned. Now it was dusk, and the men began to come home from Market; their footsteps approached, my heart leaped; then a door opened up the street, a woman's voice was raised in welcome—she had her man safe home, but I had not mine. I seemed to live a hundred years as I leaned thus against the door, listening and waiting. Then David ran in, rosy from the cold, and then Will came with my father, and the Market was over and hope for that day was done. Then I hoped for Francis on Friday, and then on Saturday; and then I rose happily on Lord's Day, making sure to see him at church, but he was not there. I felt a slight bitterness rise in my heart at this; if Sarah's faithful Denton were to absent himself from morning service, he would be haled before the magistrates and fined, but Francis Ferrand of Holroyd Hall could stay away as he chose, with impunity. It was not fair.

Will was to preach that day at the afternoon exercise, and my father, who took great pleasure in Will's ministry, was determined to go hear his son. I tried to dissuade him, for it was a very cold grim day, a hard frost on the ground and the air grey and sullen, but he became petulant, complaining that I always wished him not to do what he wished to do and to do what he wished not to do. At this David laughed, saying it sounded like the General Confession in the Prayer Book, and my father smiled, and I, seeing he seemed himself to-day, yielded gladly, for I ever hated to cross those I loved, and ran to warm his cloak by the fire. We set off in good time and went fairly briskly down Westgate, and turned into Kirkgate and went at a slower pace, as my father's steps flagged, down the hill and across the bridge. The steep Church Bank was nowadays a great trial to my father; we took it very slowly, halting often, and David ran ahead to greet Eliza, who was just entering, and many folk who had left their homes long after us over-

took us and passed before us into the church. They all had a word for my father, who was much loved; and what with his replies to these greetings, and the steepness of the hill, he was somewhat breathless when we reached the church, and I was anxious for him. But such a sweet look of contentment came to his face when Will's voice sounded, that I felt the risk of a little fatigue was worth taking to give him so much pleasure. Mr. Okell was not present, for of late his infirmities gained on him, so Will had it all in his charge. At length he mounted the pulpit, and my father looked up towards him, smiling happily.

Will did not wear a surplice in which to preach, for he abominated such popish frivolities; he was decently clad in a black gown, with a white linen band at his neck. His long harassed face was very sincere in the pulpit, and his speech, if not as well turned as my father's, very earnest; he preached that day on a text I had never much noticed before, from the 1st Peter, chapter two, verse twelve:

Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

But if I had taken little notice of it before, I have never forgotten it since; its appositeness to the occasion was such, that Will was surely led by the hand of God when he chose it.

He began to expound the text in a simple honest way, saying that all persons have a day of gracious visitation by God, when they are as it were tried and tested; it is but a day, he said, and may be lost, and once lost, all the angels in heaven and saints upon earth could not help the soul of that person. But, said Will—and was continuing the thread of his discourse upon good works and their meaning when my attention was drawn from him by a slight disturbance at the back of the church. I tried to recall my thoughts, telling myself it was nothing out of the ordinary, for these

exercises were not formal services like the one in the morning, and the congregation could move about as they chose. But the murmur grew steadily louder, and then there was a sudden complete hush and a sound of footsteps, and I saw a frown of perplexity gather on Will's face. He was staring down the church, and stumbled in his discourse; he looked away and then back again, and his words came unevenly. Suddenly the steps sounded beside me, loud and rhythmical and ringing; I looked, and there were six men in buff leather coats and polished helmets, armed with swords and pikes, marching up the church behind a man with a feather in his hat, who I suppose was their captain. They marched right up to the foot of the pulpit steps, and the captain, who had a paper in his hand, looked up at Will and read out from it.

"Are you William Clarkson, under-minister of the church in Bradford?" he shouted in a loud sing-song tone.

"I am," replied Will firmly, turning to look down at him. "And as the holder of that office, I demand to know why you are making this disturbance."

Then the captain shouted at Will again, and waved the paper to him, and Will took it and read it. At this my father suddenly exclaimed, and snatched up his churchwarden's wand and made up the church to them in a stumbling hurrying pace. Mr. Thorpe moved out and followed him, and they began to talk to the captain earnestly. While this was going on, the congregation gradually fell into confusion; some hurried to leave, others surged forward; a murmur of talk arose, and grew into a loud angry buzz. Will had now finished reading the paper; he turned his eyes in our direction, seeking Eliza, and gave her a look of such anguish that she, poor thing, cried out and scrambled past me and pushed her way up the church through the throng. I followed, and found John at my side. But before we had reached the group at the foot of the pulpit, Will turned to the congregation and held up his hand for silence so that he might speak.

"Friends," he began. The people angrily hushed one

another, for they were all anxious to hear. "Friends," repeated Will: "These men here have come with authority from the Archbishop to take me before the court of Star-chamber." There was a sharp hiss of indrawn breath from the crowd at this, and Eliza sobbed aloud in horror, for the cruelties of that court, in fines and imprisonments and punishments in the pillory, were greatly dreaded. "The summons is legal and must be obeyed," went on Will. His voice shook a little as he added: "I am to go to Wakefield immediately."

At this there was an uproar. Will held up his hand again for silence, but could not obtain it, and the officer seized his arm and pulled him down from the pulpit. The people pushed and jostled and shouted, so that I was tossed about and could neither see nor hear what was going on; indeed I think I should have been trodden underfoot if John had not thrown his arm about my waist and held me firmly upright. After a while I caught a glimpse of my father, his eyes flashing, haranguing the captain, but not a word could be heard in the tumult. Then suddenly there was a great pressing backward in the people around us, so that John and I were left in the foreground, and down came the soldiers—for they were soldiers; I did not know it then but have seen too many since to doubt it—marching two by two, their pikes held at the push, with Will walking between them. Will's face was flushed and he was weeping, but he held his head up and stepped out firmly. It was indeed a day of visitation for him, in which he glorified God by his steadiness and courage. My heart turned over within me as I saw him thus already almost a prisoner, for it seemed to me that poor Will, with his warm temper and simple honesty and his lack of worldly influence, was just the kind of man who would receive the full rigour of the court's sentence. He would mar his ease by a too vehement stating of the truth of it, and there would be nobody to protect him, nobody to be vexed if he were condemned. My father and Mr. Thorpe followed the soldiers, Mr. Thorpe looking disconcerted and perplexed; Eliza, hanging

heavily on her father's arm, was weeping and throwing herself about, hysterically. I joined the procession behind my father, and John fell in at my side.

It seemed a dream as we moved down the church, the people falling back in silence from the pikemen but murmuring angrily when they had passed. I saw Lister's freckled face amongst the crowd, and David's, white as linen, beside; Lister, I was glad to see, had David firmly by the arm and was holding him back from the soldiers. We came out of the church door and began to move down the bank, and Mr. Okell, his white head uncovered, came hurrying to meet us, and stopped and parleyed with the officer and read his paper. My spirit eased a little; perhaps, after all, this dreadful occurrence would prove a mistake, perhaps Mr. Okell and the officer would laugh together in a moment, and Will be dismissed and we all have supper together safely at home. But no; Mr. Okell threw up his hands in a gesture of despair and stood aside, and we all moved on again slowly.

While this parley was in progress some of the people dancing in the Turls began to notice the unusual happening at the church, and came running up to us, and now more and more gathered round and swelled the procession. These people were all vexed with the Puritans, who had so long kept them as they thought from their Sunday afternoon recreations, and when they heard what the matter was they began to laugh and triumph, and called out to their companions with coarse gibes to come and see the Puritan being taken to the Starchamber. The soldiers grinned and did not discourage them. So we passed through the Turls amidst a hostile crowd, laughing and shouting and jeering; and then someone threw a piece of turf at Will, and many began to pelt us. And suddenly, through a parting in the crowd, I saw Francis flushed and laughing drunkenly, his arm bent back in the act of throwing.

In that moment I hated him.

It seemed as if scales fell from my eyes and I saw him for what he was: light and loose and lecherous and on the

side of the oppressor. I could forgive him for being light and loose and lecherous, my heart cried in anguish, I could forgive his wounding of my pride, his little valuing of my love, his neglect and his disrespect and his carelessness; all that, I could accept, and still love him dearly. I acquitted him, too, of ill-treating my brother, for I guessed he had not seen Will's face or known him, but simply joined in light-heartedly at any sport that was going. But that he should thus light-heartedly and without thinking choose the side of authority just because it was authority, that he should not see that these Puritans, though in some things perhaps mistaken, were decent honest religious folk, doing what they did because they feared God more than man and did not shrink to defy the oppressor, that was intolerable to me. My soul revolted from it. Our natures are other, Francis, I told him silently; you are with the strong and the rich, I am with the humble and needy. There is a gulf between our spirits holding all the wrongs done by all the tyrants to all the poor and those who have no helper; and we can never cross that gulf, it is too wide.

As I thought thus, and the crowd closed about us and hid Francis, my father suddenly threw up his arms and staggered backwards. I almost fell beneath his weight, but John just in time caught him by the shoulders and lowered him to the ground. His eyes were closed and he was breathing very strangely. I fell on my knees beside him and took his hand. The crowd fell back, and their shouting faded to a kindly murmur, for my father was loved for his gentleness of spirit, even by those who opposed his beliefs, and besides, they were frightened, feeling in some sense responsible for his illness. I do not know what happened then around me, for my whole being was engaged in listening to my father's gasping breath, which I dreaded to hear cease; but after a long long while, as it seemed, John touched me on the shoulder and I looked up, and there was Lister and the landlord of the Pack Horse Inn with a horse and a rough farm cart. The men opened the back of the cart and lifted in my father; it was difficult to move him, since he was

so tall, and after some hanging back the bystanders helped them. The soldiers and Will and Mr. Okell and Mr. Thorpe had gone away. I climbed into the cart and pillowed my father's head in my lap, and John and Lister walked beside the cart and the innkeeper led the horse, and so we came to our house in Fairgap.

Sarah and her Denton were waiting for us there with sober faces, and David, they said, had gone to fetch the physician. The men carried my father upstairs and laid him on his bed, and Sarah and I undressed him and put warming-pans to his feet. The physician came, and seemed to understand little of my father's illness but to take a grave view of it; he shook his head very soberly, and said he must warn me that so much distress and excitement as that afternoon had brought, to one in my father's condition might well prove fatal. He had brought some physic, and we tried to give it to my father, but he could not drink, and the physic ran out of the corners of his mouth, which to me was somehow extremely affecting. When all was done that could be done and the house was quiet, I prepared to watch by my father's bed, but bethinking myself of David, I went down to see how the poor lad fared. He was sitting with our Bible open before him, not reading it but staring ahead, his face pale, his blue eyes very wide in his wretchedness, for he loved my father very dearly. To my surprise Lister sat beside him, coaxing him in a low voice to read with him. The apprentice told me that John had gone to see if aught could be done for Will, and had bidden him stay with us, to be at hand to run messages.

I went upstairs and sat beside my father. From time to time he moaned a little and moved his head restlessly, and once or twice threw out a few muddled words, when I laid my hand on his forehead to soothe him; but on the whole he lay quiet except for his breath, which came harsh and noisy and uneven. The light died, and Sarah came in with a candle and offered to relieve my watch, but I would not leave my father.

After long long hours, there was a stir below, footsteps

very quiet on the stairs, and then John's voice whispering: "Penninah." I went to the doorway to him. In the flickering candlelight he looked hot and dirty and very tired, there were beads of sweat on his forehead and his dress was disordered.

"I came to tell you, Penninah," he said in a low voice: "I am going to Guisely with a message from Mr. Okell to ask the vicar there to write a letter about Will to Lord Fairfax—his benefice is in Lord Fairfax's gift and he is a friend of his son Ferdinando. Lord Fairfax may be able by influence to moderate the court's judgment."

"What is Will accused of?" I whispered.

"Preaching at the afternoon exercises instead of catechising, discussing doctrine not contained in the teaching of the Church of England, not reading the Book of Sports—oh, and not wearing his whites," said John. "But he has done no more than other preachers in the West Riding; plenty round Leeds and Halifax have done the same. If Lord Fairfax intervenes, Mr. Okell thinks Will may be reprimanded without a trial. But I fear he must lose his place. I am to ride to Guiseley now, and then on with the letter to Lord Fairfax."

"John," I said very quietly: "If you still wish me to be your wife, I will wed you as soon as it is right for me to leave my father."

John gave me a strange burning look. "But you love Frank," he said.

"I can never marry Francis," I told him, looking beyond him into the darkness. "Our spirits are utterly apart."

John took my hands and held them very strongly. "We shall be man and wife, then?" he said.

"God willing, it shall be so," I answered.

He had barely gone when there came the loud rhythmical knocking on the house-door which always betokened Francis. I hurried down the stairs to him, for I did not want him to rush to me with his usual heedlessness and make a disturbance in my father's chamber. Thunder came in first, crossed to the hearth and lay down heavily. Francis

looked shamefaced and less sure of himself than usual, but handsome and vivid, as always.

"Pen," he began hurriedly: "I have only this moment heard the news; I am truly sorry about Will and your father."

"But you were in the Turls this afternoon, were you not," I said with a steady look at him.

He coloured, and swung his hat uneasily. "Pen, I did not know it was Will," he said. "I have only just heard the news, believe me."

"I have some other news for you, Francis," I said, striving to keep my voice steady. "I am betrothed to John Thorpe, and shall shortly wed him."

Francis stared at me, incredulous. Slowly his face fell; his cheek paled, his mouth gaped, till his good looks were all quite vanished.

"Why, Pen!" he stammered. "Why, Pen! Betrothed to John! But you and I—why, Pen!" He seemed so astounded, so taken aback, so boyish and loving in his hurt, that my heart throbbed, and if he had left speaking there I might have melted to him. But he went on, and all the differences between us and his lack of understanding of them were in his words.

"On my word of honour, Pen," he said, "I did not know it was Will. Don't you believe me?"

"I believe you, Francis," I said. "But that is not the argument."

"Don't talk as if you were David," said Francis impatiently.

"I can only speak as my heart teaches me," said I. "And you and I do not speak alike, Francis."

He stared at me as if he could not believe his ears. I gazed back at him, very sadly but very steadily.

"But, Pen!" he pleaded. "Pen?"

Slowly and softly and irrevocably, I shook my head.

Without a word Francis swung on his heel and left the house.

I stood there for a moment, gazing after Francis, while Thunder with a protesting murmur rose and padded heavily

after him, then I thought I heard a muttering sound above-stairs, and ran back to my father. He was half raised in bed, with his eyes wide open, and as I came in he pointed at the door and muttered thickly some words that I took for a question as to who was below. I told him: "It was Francis, Father." It seemed to me that he received this with a troubled look, so I bent over him and took his hand and said: "Father, I have promised to wed John." He nodded to show he understood, pressed my fingers and smiled at me, but his look did not clear; still clinging to my hand he lay back, and gazed very earnestly at the candle as though considering. Then all of a sudden he murmured quietly:

"For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory. Amen."

His voice was low but very clear; closing his eyes, he sighed once, and was gone.

John and I were married by licence the day after we buried my father.

III
DIVISION

I LIVE A SOBER AND GODLY LIFE

I HAD SET MY hand to the plough of a sober and godly life in my marriage to John, and I would not let myself falter in my course or fail in my duty as a wife, though at first I laboured under many difficulties. On the day of our marriage itself, as we came along Kirkgate after the wedding, man and wife, my hand resting on John's arm, our friends and family following after, a woman stepped out from the side of the street and stood in our path. I did not recognise her, and made to pass, but she snatched at my sleeve, and thinking she wished to offer us felicitations on our marriage, I halted.

"Well, you have got your way, Penninah Clarkson, and my son is gone!" she cried out shrilly.

Then I saw that it was Mrs. Ferrand, though her pretty face was all haggard and her golden hair bedraggled.

"Francis has gone to the Low Countries to fight!" screamed Mrs. Ferrand, throwing her words in my face. (Her lisp somehow made them all the more affecting.) "He would not stay to dance at your wedding. You have got your way!"

"Frank's comings and goings are no concern of my wife's, Aunt Sybil," said John steadily.

"Come away, Sybil," said Mr. Ferrand, coming up behind her and taking her arm. "As John says, it is no concern of theirs whether or no we have lost our son."

His voice was so bitter that I almost fainted under its reproach and the public disgrace, and would have sunk to the ground but for John's arm to which I clung heavily; then it came to me how cruel and how unjust it was that the Ferrands should blame me for what had happened, and

a flame of anger sprang up in my heart. I raised my head up proudly and walked very steadily along at John's side.

But it was not a propitious beginning to our married life, nor one which could be acceptable to Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe or to John. When we reached The Breck, I expected some enquiry from my new relatives about Francis, and indeed Mrs. Thorpe's face was full of question; but, owing I think to a sign from John, the Ferrands' name was not mentioned by anyone. This was a decent forbearance on their part, but I wished it otherwise, and that night when John and I were alone together at last, I prepared to open my heart about Francis, to my husband; for I desired there should be nothing but what was clear and open between us. To begin the subject, which was not easy for me, I asked him if he blamed me, as the Ferrands did, for Francis's departure.

"I blame you for nothing, Penninah," said John.

"I wish to explain to you," I began.

"Some other time," he said. "Not now. Not now."

"But, John," I protested: "I must clear myself to you in this matter."

"There is no need," said John.

His voice was vexed; he frowned and turned aside; bewildered and heartsore, I desisted.

It was not the last time John was to perplex me, for I found—as perhaps many of those newly wedded find—that in spite of all the many years I had known him, I had married a stranger. There were sombre depths and strange fires in John's nature which I had not understood. Nor did I ever altogether understand him, even in our best years of love or in our old age together; I came to love him strongly and know him well, but there was always a shadowed recess in his nature into which I never penetrated, though I believe he would gladly have had me come there. He had never many words; he never praised my beauty or told me that he loved me; he had no quickness or expressiveness in action, which indeed he disliked as ostentatious; he was taciturn and stubborn, his strength lay in steadiness and

persistence. It was not a nature which made the first steps in married life easy for me.

It was not easy, in any case, for a young girl brought up as I was to become a wife. Being motherless, and having always lived very quietly and modestly, I knew little of men's desires or my own nature, and it was not until I lay in John's arms that I knew what I had lost in losing Francis. With the help of God, to whom I cried in the dark hour of this discovery, I put the thought aside; but to say the truth, during the first days of my marriage I was frightened by the strength of John's passion for me. Yet though I feared it, I respected him for a feeling so powerful and real and stable. Presently I began to feel for him, as I believe many women feel for men who love them, a kind of compassion, a loving pity; I felt sorry that a man so strong should seek with such a burning intensity something which to me meant so little, and I took his rough dark head on my breast with a wish to cherish and protect him, as if he were a child. All these emotions, so violent and contradictory, were very perplexing and troubling to one who had, like myself, always been proud and grave and self-controlled. Then, too, I did not for some few months conceive, and though John said nothing to me on the matter, I knew he was disappointed, for Mrs. Thorpe made it a great trouble to me. She did not hesitate to make me out a barren woman, though I was barely twenty; and when poor little Martha died, Mrs. Thorpe hinted that her early fading came from some delicacy she had inherited from the Clarksons, though truly it was due to the failing of Eliza's milk because of her grief over Will's summons to Starchamber.

In truth most of the troubles in my life at The Breck sprang from Mrs. Thorpe. She was vexed with me because of my early refusal of John—at the time I found this harsh and unreasonable, but since I have had sons of my own I understand it perfectly. She was vexed with me because she did not know the bottom of the history between myself and Francis. She was vexed with me because Mr. Thorpe

showed more fondness for me than for his own daughter—though she herself often spoke sharply enough to Eliza when she displayed some weakness or pettiness of character. Mrs. Thorpe was vexed with me, too, for another reason, of which I learned for the first time on the day after my marriage.

There was some scruple about opening and reading my father's will, because Mr. Thorpe was the only one of the executors named who could be present, Will being away and Mr. Ferrand refusing to take up the charge. But this being got over, the will was read that afternoon at The Breck, and explained by the Thorpes' lawyer to us, that is to the Thorpes and Eliza and myself and David, whom the Thorpes had brought to live at The Breck for the present. I was astounded by the will's contents; so many closes of land, and houses, seemed to be my father's property, that he must surely have been a rich man, with no need to trouble himself over business. I thought to myself: "There will be no hindrance to David's going to Cambridge," and rejoiced, and smiled across at him. But I noticed that the Thorpes' faces all remained very still and gloomy, and the lawyer's next words explained the reason, for he began:

"The mortgages——"

The Thorpes all sighed and shifted their position, and kept their eyes from me as the lawyer went on talking. It seemed everything my father owned had long since been mortgaged to Mr. Thorpe. His trade as a clothier had been going the wrong way, and he had been borrowing, even before I knew the Thorpes—which explained to me both why he had not taken Joseph Lister as an apprentice and why he had been distressed about Will's wanting to marry Eliza. And, the cloth trade having suffered so much of late, his estate had never recovered, but sunk continually deeper and deeper into debt. Oh, I understood so many things now; the quietness and emptiness of our loom chamber, my father's trouble over his accounts the time John first came to cast them for him, his eagerness that I should marry John, his hesitation over David's going to

the University. I understood it all; and my heart ached as I thought of my poor father bearing this distress alone through his last troubled years, not sharing it with anyone.

"My father has nothing to leave his children, then?" I asked the lawyer quietly.

"Less than nothing," blurted the lawyer. He explained that the value of all the property was far below that of the mortgages.

Then indeed I bowed my head and suffered, to think that my father's good name was marred, and David murmured: "Oh, Pen!" in a tone of anguish, and the Thorpes were all very still, and said nothing.

"You have lost by my father, and I have no jointure to bring you," I said to them at last.

"Mr. Clarkson's life was doubtless more acceptable to the Lord than gold," said Mrs. Thorpe, but not as if she altogether believed it.

"He was too soft for trade," said Mr. Thorpe in a tone of apology.

"No jointure was necessary," muttered John gruffly.

"David and I knew nothing of this indebtedness, and we are deeply grateful to you and sorry for it," I forced out, my cheeks burning with shame.

"There is no cause for you to distress yourself, Penninah," said Mrs. Thorpe. "You are our daughter now, and Will is our son. And David shall not lose by it."

Her tone was cold, save when she spoke of David, and I felt our dependence very bitterly. Indeed, what with this grief of my father's bankruptcy, John's sombre passion, Mrs. Thorpe always hinting to me about my childlessness, Will in a London prison, Eliza poor thing at home at The Breek, weeping over Will and Martha and complaining because David took up room at the table, and David's future so uncertain—I forbade myself all thoughts of Francis—during the first months of my married life the storms of adversity seemed to beat upon me very heavily.

There were smaller matters too which yet added their share of grief. Sarah, saying her task with the Clarksons

was now performed and she could enter into her rest, married her faithful Denton, and went to live in a small noisome house at the back of Church Bank. I smiled a little wryly to hear her call the state of matrimony "rest," and thought she might soon learn to regard it differently; for I judged, if the quiet-seeming John were not easy, Denton might indeed be difficult, as a husband. He was a short swarthy man with large ears and a high colour, somewhat bow-legged and tremendously opinionated; he had a strong singing voice, and fancied himself a good deal in prayer and praise—no, I did not think he would prove a restful partner. But whether Sarah had found rest or no she had certainly left my service. I had often suffered from her prim ways and sharp tongue, but now that she was gone I understood how good and trusty a friend she had been to me, and missed her greatly.

Tabby, too, gave us a deal of trouble. Mrs. Thorpe disliked cats, which she thought newfangled, but for the sake of David, who loved Tabby dearly, she was content to put up with her and give her a home at The Breck. But the ungrateful Tabby, old as she was, would not remain at The Breck; she wandered away constantly down towards Bradford, and was several times returned to us, thin and scared, her glossy coat all dull and matted, by reproachful Fairgap neighbours. The amount of trouble this caused at The Breck was quite out of proportion to Tabby's size, for Mrs. Thorpe was vexed at the slight to her hospitality. She said: "She doesn't know when she's well off," in a tone so meaning that it identified the cat with her mistress, and I felt guilty of Tabby's misdeeds as if they were ingratitude on my part. Then one evening as we sat at table there was a knock at the door, and a liveried servant of Mr. Ferrand's stood there with Tabby in his arms, smirking slyly and asking if the cat belonged to The Breck; she had been found at Holroyd Hall, lying beside Thunder. His tone as he said this, and Mrs. Thorpe's look at me, were hard to bear, and the air seemed thick with jealousy and suspicion. But David ran happily to take the cat, and John said quietly:

"Have you any news of my cousin?"

The man said, aye, they had news; Master Francis had sent a letter, very ill writ Mr. Ferrand had said peevishly, telling how he was in a leaguer, that is a siege, explained the fellow importantly, before some outlandish city in the Low Countries. He had asked for money, which made Mr. Ferrand roar angrily, and seemed to be enjoying himself in camp. Ralph was with him as a body-servant. John nodded to show his interest, and gave the man a coin, at which his father frowned. Next week the same man brought Tabby back again with the same story, adding that Mr. Ferrand had sworn an oath to shoot the cat if she came on his land again. But, said the man, we need not trouble ourselves, he thought, for Thunder was to be shot, so there would be nothing to attract Tabby to Holroyd Hall. Thunder had fretted himself sick over the loss of Master Francis, he went on, though we were all silent and asked no questions; the dog lay on Master Frank's bed all day and would not eat or stir, and it started Mrs. Ferrand off weeping again, every time she saw him. At this there was another heavy silence and pursed lips and a sour look from Mrs. Thorpe, and my spirit fell so low that I reproached Tabby in my heart for causing so much sorrow to her mistress.

A few days later, when the cat was returned once again from Fairgap, Mr. Thorpe proposed cheerfully to drown her. At this David looked so horrorstruck, and spoke up so strongly in condemnation of a murder so foul, that the Thorpes were made uncomfortable at their own table, and even amid my many griefs, I was hard put to it not to smile. I glanced across at John, but there was no answering smile on my husband's face. It was like John that he took pains to see Tabby properly housed and fed, even once bringing her on horseback himself from Bradford Market Cross, Tabby miauling and scratching all the way, and opposed her drowning, but could not find a laugh for the business. We Clarksons, my father and David and I, had always been a cheerful household, full of pleasant jokes, and I missed our ready laughter.

I missed, too, the noise and bustle of the Bradford streets. Not that it was quiet at The Breck, for there were always the shuttles clacking in the looms upstairs, men carrying wool or yarn about the yard or busy in the fields with the hay and oats, Scaife the ulnager coming to seal the cloths, pack-horses taking pieces to and fro; but I never saw another woman to speak to except Mrs. Thorpe and Eliza, save on Sundays, so that I felt lonely and apart. I missed my reading to my father, too, for the Thorpes did not willingly spend money on pamphlets or diurnals. All this made my life seem empty of everything save Mrs. Thorpe and John and trouble.

Indeed as I look back on those months now, I know not how I ever lived through them, and I could not have done so without the grace and loving-kindness of God, Whose hand was stretched out over me. Many were the nights when my sleep went from me and I was much troubled by wicked worldly thoughts, and I slipped from bed and knelt and prayed very earnestly that God would give me strength to keep the vows I had made to my husband. I rose refreshed and comforted, sure that the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than the greatest outside it, and that John was of the elect who care for what is right above their own interest, and Francis otherwise. I took John's hand in mine as he slept, and felt a strong respect and affection for him. But then as I lay awake, I thought of my father, and Will, and little Martha, and David, and my spirits drooped again. I would not wish my worst enemy, not even this tyrannical second Charles himself, such storms of tribulation as I passed through in the first year after my marriage.

But slowly and steadily and laboriously, and as I see now just by each of us living on and striving each day to do what we thought right, with God's help we weathered through these tribulations. I came to understand Mrs. Thorpe better, and be able to live less uneasily with her, though we were never truly near to one another. She was a woman who believed in justice rather than mercy, in duty

rather than affection. At first this chilled my heart, but gradually I came to see its virtues. Mrs. Thorpe did not love me, nor strive to make me happy, but she did her duty by her son's wife with all possible strictness, and rendered justice to my work about the house and my care of my husband. The more I saw of the 'Thorpes' life, and their strict accounting of every penny, the more I respected their generosity and forbearance towards my father, and I strove to repay them in willing work and submissiveness. (They had dismissed their serving maid when David and I went to live at The Breck, and Mrs. Thorpe and I shared the work of the house between us.) If there were times when I felt that the Clarksons were the 'Thorpes' charity pensioners and I could not bear it, I locked the feeling in my heart and did not let it show, though the effort blanched my cheek and choked my throat; and as time went on, the habit of not being mistress in the house, at first very difficult for me after my long years in command at my father's, grew easier to me. Tabby, though somewhat disdainfully, settled down at Sarah's, a relief ridiculously out of proportion to the occurrence. John began to talk to me, very briefly at first, of his affairs, his yarn and cloth and marketing, and finding me interested, spoke more extensively; we slipped into a relation calmer and more everyday.

And then a great happiness came to all of us. To our everlasting gratitude, Lord Fairfax had written to friends on the Starchamber council about Will, and because he was a great man and Will, after all, not a very great transgressor, these friends, pretending there was some inaccuracy in the accusation, managed at long last to get it quashed, and Will was sent off home again from London without a trial. Our joy and relief when John heard this by letter from Lord Fairfax's London agent was very great; all our tongues seemed loosed as if from a long silence, and we chattered readily. Soon Will himself turned up at Little Holroyd; to our surprise he looked not greatly harmed, being even a little stouter than before, though a few grey hairs flecked the brown about his temples. The meeting between him

and Eliza, their little Martha being gone, was affecting; but Will was so taken up with arguing about his offence and the technical illegalities of his arrest, and Starchamber and the King's prerogative and habeas corpus and so on, that he soon recovered from his grief, remembering it only sometimes, suddenly, when tears filled his eyes. He was warmer in debate than ever, and had a way of slowly putting his head on one side which meant he was about to bring out something he thought devastating. Sometimes, when I remembered how his arrest had caused my father's death, I felt almost angry to see him there, hale and well and eating heartily, but then I reflected that my father was at rest now, safe with the Lord and no longer vexed about owing the Thorpes money, and I took comfort, and reproved myself for not being more grateful for my brother's safety. Mr. Okell dared not allow Will to be under-minister again in Bradford, but Lord Fairfax found him a place out at Adel, near Leeds, so he was not far from us. Dr. Hitch, who was rector at Adel, held several other benefices and scarcely ever visited the place, so Will as under-minister had plenty of opportunity for work and ministry, and he and Eliza lived in Adel very happily.

My next pleasure was David's advance in health and strength. At first after our father's death David was much stricken with grief; he ate and slept badly, and was apt to sit moping in corners except when he was reading, and to show an excessive fondness for me which somewhat irritated my husband. But now time, and the pleasure of Will's return, had cheered him; the air at The Breck was sweet and open, Mrs. Thorpe kept a good if homely table and delighted to urge him in eating, for she loved the boy though she would not admit it, and David no longer had the distress of my father's increasing illness, which for the last few years had borne heavily on his tender heart. Moreover, I believe it was a deep relief to David that I was married to John and not to Francis, of whom he had ever, as I saw now, been jealous. (In this he showed a keen instinct, for I loved David more than John, but less than Francis.)

Lister, too, was ever David's friend, and the two passed happy hours together, Lister talking to David about weaving, and David instructing Lister in the scriptures and the classics. So David began to lose the pale frail look he had worn of late, and to grow, not plump, for he was always slender, but firm and rosy. He shot up in height, too, and became soon a tall dreamy lad with a scholar's stoop; his hair darkened a little from its childhood flaxen but still was a fair light colour, his eyes had their old clear blue, and his smile was gentle. In school he excelled more notably than ever; Mr. Wilcocke rode all the way up to Little Holroyd one evening to tell Mr. Thorpe, with great emphasis, that it would be a disgrace to Bradford if David were kept back from Cambridge.

"Nobody is thinking of keeping David back from Cambridge," said John drily.

At this Mr. Thorpe coughed a little, and looked rather dubiously across at his son, but John took no notice.

"In that case," said Mr. Wilcocke, delighted: "I think David should be entered soon for some college."

This was agreed to, by John and his mother rather than by Mr. Thorpe, who however offered no articulate objection; the college chosen was the one Mr. Wilcocke had attended, Clare Hall by name.

Mr. Thorpe was inclined to be peevish about this when Mr. Wilcocke had gone.

"It will be very costly," he said. "And you will have your own children to provide for, son."

John shrugged his shoulders.

"David will win a sizarship, or whatever they are called," he said. "And if he goes to Cambridge now, we shall have learned the way there by the time my son is of age to go."

Mrs. Thorpe nodded her head slowly; Mr. Thorpe looked impressed but disconcerted. "You mean to make a scholar of my grandson?" he said in a doubtful tone. "Or a gentleman?"

"Aye," said John. "Unless Penninah has any objection."

I smiled and shook my head. For this was the latest and

the greatest of my joys: I was with child. There are many true sayings in the Psalms of David, but this I think is truest of them all for a woman: *Instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children.* The Psalmist surely had great wisdom, and much understanding of the human heart. *Hearken, O daughter, and consider, incline thine ear,* he says: *forget also thine own people, and thy father's house. For instead of thy fathers thou shalt have children.* . . . It was deeply true for me. All else faded beside my coming child. I did not, it is true, forget my beloved father, but when I thought of him, I forgot the sadness of his latter years, and thought only what a joy it would be to him to have a grandchild. Fairgap became now of less interest to me than Little Holroyd, for The Breck was to be the home of my child. My own people, Will and David and the joy of my youth Francis, stepped back and became mere remote bystanders of my life, for John was the father of my child.

No man could have been kinder than John, while I was bearing his children. There was a true greatness of heart in him, and he did not find my condition tiresome or laughable, as I have since heard many husbands do, but worthy of honour and respect. He would not let me carry heavy weights or in any way exert myself unduly, and treated my sickness and faintness with a grave decency for which I was very grateful. Mrs. Thorpe too, when she saw that I was glad of the child, softened towards me; she spared me in the house and gave me the best of the milk to drink, and though she professed to find the embroidery I put on the baby's caps and dresses excessive and ostentatious, she let me see that she respected my skill with the needle, and saw to it that I had fine materials for my work. Not to be outdone, Mr. Thorpe went down to Bradford one day—which nowadays was rare with him because of his sciatica—and came back very bright and chuckling and full of a secret which he wished us to discover, namely that he had ordered a very fine cradle for his grandchild. The cradle when it came was most handsome, with John's initials and mine intertwined in the carving, and the date at the foot,

but the man who brought it brought also a piece of bad news; namely the first imposition of the tax of ship-money by the King. This was quite unlawful, there being no Parliament sitting to authorise it; moreover, this tax had never been imposed on inland towns before, but only on seaports for the provision of navy vessels to protect their shipping. So this tax had neither law nor tradition, nor anything but the King's will, to justify it. I remember I was kneeling beside the cradle when I heard the news; I looked up, startled, and saw John's face black with anger, and Mr. Thorpe's worried and distressed; and for a moment my heart sank and I felt I was bringing my child into a sorely troubled world. But then I thought: "Well, he will want to play his part," and so comforted myself.

My child was born in May, on the very day when Lister's ten-years apprenticeship was concluded, a thing he often took pleasure in reminding me of in after years. I was long in labour, and my delivery was difficult, but I was not afraid. I felt that to bear my child was what I most wanted in life, and I would not shrink from pain if that were necessary to child-bearing. John suffered greatly; he appeared often at my door, white and silent, and passed on without a word when he saw the physician and midwife still busy about me. But at length in the evening my first-born, my eldest son, came forth safely, and then, as it says in Holy Writ, I remembered no more my anguish, for joy that a man was born into the world.

We named him Thomas, after Mr. Thorpe; I would gladly have called him after my own father but did not cross John in the matter, feeling confident I should have other children. There was a short delay before he was baptized. Archbishop Laud, among other strict new regulations which he was forcing upon us, had enjoined that a woman should be churched after childbirth, the first time she left her house. John was determined that no Thorpe should yield to the Archbishop's tyranny, and so he wished me to leave the house on some brief visit, before the day of my churching and the child's baptism. I was very

willing to humour him in this matter, so, though Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe were a little dissatisfied, I went down one day to see Sarah Denton and her baby, and returned home to Little Holroyd, without going near the church. A few days later we all rode down to Bradford and went through the two services. Will christened Thomas, he and David being the babe's godfathers, and we had a fine christening party at The Breck afterwards. Mr. and Mrs. Ferrand had been invited, as was proper. They did not come, but sent a silver christening mug for little Thomas which rather disconcerted the Thorpes, it was so handsome. I thought this kind of them and like them, but I had a scruple against Thomas using the mug; I put it away, and thought John seemed pleased.

Thomas was a gentle and good child, dark like the Thorpes but with our family's clear skin, and a very sweet expression. David from the first loved him dearly, marvelling, as indeed I did myself, over the perfection of his fingers and toes, the soft rosiness of his cheek, the sweetness of his breath. He took my breast well, and thrived on it; and to nurse him on the hearth—his little feet kicking in the warmth, his large dark eyes very bright and thoughtful, John coming in and watching with a soft proud look on his face—gave me a deep content in my new life.

CLOTH AND SHIPS ARE JUST THE SAME

EVEN IF THERE had been no private grudge between the two families, I doubt whether the Ferrands would have come to The Breck at that time, for rumours were beginning to be very stirring, and men's tempers to mount intolerably, over these two matters of politics and religion, and it was well known which side The Breck took in them. Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe were, I believe, a little tired of the dissension, and daunted by what had happened to Will, for after all they were getting on in years and Mr. Thorpe was ailing; but John grew more and more determined.

Now that his father mostly stayed at home to nurse his foot, John had much travelling to do to buy wool and dispose of our cloth; and he always came back with news of some further Church tyranny or some new illegal tax-gathering, for in these two matters we were continually pressed down by the heavy hands of the King's two favourites, Archbishop Laud and another man we now began to hear much of, Sir Thomas Wentworth, afterwards Lord Strafford. John was especially vexed with this Strafford, because he was a very able man and a Yorkshireman, and had been strong for Parliament before the Court corrupted him, so that John had rather admired him, and it seemed as if nobody was to be trusted and one could not know which way to turn, if a man of that kind was to turn out so badly. Laud and this Strafford worked hand in glove, and hardly a week went by without some new oppression. Altars were to be moved to the east and curtained, the bishops were not to regard lecturers as clergy, our children must be catechised out of the prayer-book every Sunday; the King set up a

monopoly of soap-making, fined people because they chanced to live in royal forests, though the places they inhabited had not been forests within the memory of man, and imposed another and yet another writ of ship-money. So it seemed that, as long as Laud and Strafford had their way, we were to own neither our souls nor our bodies. The King on Strafford's advice signed proclamations ordering Laud's rules, and Laud's clergy preached submission to the King's taxes; and so amongst the people those who hated Laud for his persecution of true religion, and those who hated the King and Strafford for his illegal taxes, found their interests intertwined, and themselves friends, united in their resistance to a common tyranny. Tyranny affected John very powerfully, though not in the same way as my poor father; John was a young man, strong in mind and body, and he wished to take some active part in defying it, and at times felt very restless and vexed because he saw no way to do so. About this time Mr. Wilcocke, our school-master, died, and Archbishop Laud caused one of his own favourites, a man named Gervase Worrall, to be appointed. Old Mr. Thorpe was one of the trustees of the school, and John urged him strongly to petition against this man, who was a finicky sort of creature from southern parts, a scholar doubtless but quite unable to rule our Bradford boys; David despised him. Mr. Thorpe, though somewhat reluctantly, called a meeting of the trustees, and all Bradford rang with the dispute, but the matter then seemed to be shelved and Mr. Worrall stayed on, and I thought Mr. Thorpe was not sorry to be spared the necessity for taking active measures. But John, who besides his public resentment hated to think that his own son would have to sit under this Arminian, and imbibe false doctrine, in a few more years, was greatly angered, and felt his own impotence in the matter very bitterly.

"Is there nowt we can do against this proud prelate?" he began from time to time to mutter; and then he was wont to lay his hand on David's shoulder and bid him learn rapidly and well; he meant, though he did not say

so, that he hoped David would one day fight the good fight against these corrupt and worldly clerics. David understood him, and smiled quietly but steadfastly and nodded; and Lister shrilled:

"The day of the Lord will come. Consume them in Thy wrath, O Lord, that they may perish!"

"Are we to suffer this and be silent? Is there nowt we can do for English liberty?" John muttered again whenever he heard of another ship-money writ, or of the atrocious cruelty of Starchamber to Puritan writers, or of the outrageous fines imposed by the King's Council on some unlucky gentlemen who were thought to have shown discourtesy to Lord Strafford. For Starchamber thought nothing of cutting off men's ears—which made me sick to hear of—and setting them in the pillory, or keeping them in the Tower till they died; while Lord Strafford was a very vehement warm-tempered man, easily angered by fancied slights, and one Yorkshire gentleman lost almost all his fortune simply for standing with his back to him with his hat on.

"Is there nowt we can do?" repeated John, brooding, when he heard these things; and each time he asked the question his voice was more bitter.

I did not try to coax him from these moods, for I was all with him in them; my heart burned when I thought of these tyrants shadowing the world, preparing cruelty and persecution and misery for my little son. Since Mr. Thorpe liked less and less to hear of politics, for tyranny distressed him and yet resistance troubled him, John saved his thoughts till we were alone together. He did not express them very clearly even then, just standing before me with his head lowered and a dark look on his face and muttering: "Can we do nothing, Penninah," in a gruff slow tone; but I knew how he felt. And sometimes I would put my hand through his arm, and pace beside him up and down our chamber in silence, till slowly his brow cleared and at length he sighed and asked after Thomas's new tooth and managed to smile at me, though ruefully.

One day in the late afternoon—it was in the autumn, I remember; the wind was blowing strongly and the rain lashing the windows outside, so that within the house felt very warm and snug by contrast—I had been busy with Thomas and put him down to lie in his cradle by the fire, and asked Mr. Thorpe to see that he came to no harm while I went into the kitchen to help Mrs. Thorpe with the supper. Mr. Thorpe's sciatica was very painful with the damp weather, and he sat with his leg up and his head back, so I asked him before I left him if there were anything he needed. He said there was not, he was content to sit in the firelight without a candle and keep an eye on his grandson. I was surprised, therefore, as soon as I reached the kitchen to hear him calling urgently:

"Penninah! Penninah!"

I feared for Thomas, and ran back quickly. The child was safe, sleeping just as I had left him, but Mr. Thorpe was sitting up in his chair, frowning uneasily, his face turned towards the stairway to the loom-chamber, whence I could hear the voice of John and some other man.

"Go up and listen, Penninah," he bade me urgently. "Then come back and tell me what they say. Go quickly."

"But, Grandfather," I murmured, being loth to play the spy, and knowing John's ways in the trade sometimes differed from his father's: "John will surely tell you?"

"You're too scrupulous, Pen," said Mr. Thorpe irritably. "If you won't do it yourself, send me Lister."

I determined to do neither, but to tell John his father wanted to see him, and ran upstairs for the purpose.

The man with John was one I had often seen before, a very tall thin mean-looking person, Scaife by name, agent to Mr. Metcalfe of Leeds, the West Riding ulnager. It was his duty to attach seals to all the pieces of cloth in Bradford, to signify that the tax on the piece had been paid. Sometimes the man came himself to The Breck, sometimes John sent Lister to him to pay the tax on so many pieces and bring home the seals; without the ulnager's seal no piece of cloth could be sold. I had heard John grumbling some-

times about this man, because though it was his duty to visit the clothiers at their requirement, with those of small trade he would often delay to do this, which to poor men was a great hindrance. It was none of the Thorpes' business, said John, for Scaife never delayed about coming to The Breck, he took too many pence there; but injustice, on whomsoever it was inflicted, ever irked my husband. I wondered if this were the subject between the two men now, for they were both very angry, Scaife gabbling and gesturing, John with his feet apart and his head lowered, while Lister stood all agog, grinning nervously, in the background.

"You have no right to demand it," said John gruffly. "The tax on a kerscy is one penny, and has always been so within the memory of man."

"But kerseys nowadays are twice as long as they used to be," gabbled Scaife.

"Not twice," said John.

"And broader," argued Scaife. "And of a finer quality."

"That is not the argument," said John. "The tax is a tax on each piece of cloth, like a poll-tax on a person. A tall person does not pay more than a short."

"For more cloth, more tax," said Scaife. "That's only fair."

"If we made the kerseys shorter, would you take less?" said John sardonically.

Scaife was silent; then turning aside, he blew his nose in his fingers over the floor—a dirty habit I never could stomach. Then he turned back to John, and said disagreeably, pointing at a pile of cloths which stood in the corner:

"The tax is a penny-ha'penny for a kersey, Mester Thorpe, and if those kerseys there are off to London to-morrow, I'll thank you to pay on them now."

"Those cloths are already sealed," said John, turning up a fold to show him. "You can look for yourself—Lister here bought the seals off you last week."

"That's right," put in Lister.

"I shall want another ha'penny on each of those cloths," said Scaife.

"You can want," said John.

"Eh? What? You don't mean you won't pay?" cried Scaife, astounded. "All the rest have paid."

"Aye," said John grimly. "I hear you've taken more than a hundred pound extra in Halifax neighbourhood these last few months. So now you're beginning on Bradford. Well, I won't pay."

"Now come, Mester John," urged the ulnager, taking a fawning familiar tone: "You've always been a law-abiding man, and your father before you. You won't go to break the law now, will you?"

"The law?" said John. "What law? By whose authority has the tax been raised?"

"Mester Metcalfe's, of course," said the ulnager irritably.

"And who gave Thomas Metcalfe leave to impose a subsidy?" said John. "He is following the King's example, I suppose."

"That's treason, Mester Thorpe," said Scaife virtuously, looking down his nose.

"Treason?" said John sardonically. "To ape His Gracious Majesty? Can that be treason?"

"Take care Starchamber doesn't hear you!" blustered Scaife, thrusting his face forward into John's. "You mightn't get off as lightly as Will Clarkson."

"Oh, cease your prating," said John roughly. "Starchamber has nowt to do wi' clothiers; it's for clerics."

"Are you going to pay the extra ha'penny or are you not?" shouted Scaife.

"I am not," said John.

There was a pause. Scaife, disconcerted, rubbed his long jaw. "You're a hard man to deal with, Mester John," he said at length in a deprecating tone. "I'd be glad to have a word with your father."

"My father is pained with a sciatica," said John steadily. "He cannot see you."

Scaife sighed, fidgeted, and at last took up his hat. "You

haven't heard the last of this," he said. "Mester Metcalfe means to have that extra ha'penny."

"And I mean not to pay it," said my husband.

"He who laughs last laughs longest," said Scaife.

"I'm not laughing at all," said John.

Scaife swore beneath his breath and clattered downstairs. John stood watching him with a sardonic smile.

"John," I said quietly, stepping forward, "your father wants to speak to you."

"I daresay," said John. "I'll come."

We went down the inner stairs together. "Well, I dealt with that fellow," said John, a grim satisfaction in his tone.

I laid my hand on his arm. "But, John, Starchamber," I said fearfully.

"Starchamber is for clerics, not for clothiers," repeated John. "Penninah, ask one of the boys to saddle Dolly for me."

"You mean to ride to-night? In all this rain?" said I.

He did not answer, and I knew he was set in his purpose, whatever it might be; his stubborn mood was on him.

When I returned from the errand, I found him standing in front of his father with his head slightly lowered and his feet apart, looking very obstinate and stolid. Mrs. Thorpe had come in from the kitchen and was standing by the table, an expression of mingled pride and fear in her face.

"Why ask me?" Mr. Thorpe was saying testily. "You do the greatest part of the business without a word from me; why ask me now? Do as you please." He was silent a moment, frowning and chewing his lip, then burst out: "But I see no sense in it. This is not from the King; the ulnage is farmed out; the King knows nowt of it. Scaife is only the agent of an agent."

"But it is all of a piece," said John. "Unlawful subsidies and unlawful ulnage are both unlawful. They are signs of the times. Taking a ha'penny is as unlawful as taking a thousand. Are we to suffer injustice without a word? If we let them take our liberties from us we deserve to lose

them." He spoke in an abrupt and jerky manner which with him was the mark of being much moved. "Nevertheless, Father," he added: "If you forbid me, of course I shall not go."

There was a silence. Mr. Thorpe frowned and fidgeted and pouted; John stood lowering; Mrs. Thorpe watched them intently across the table. Then suddenly Mr. Thorpe cried out in a vexed helpless tone: "Well, go and God be with you."

John's face broke into a smile, and his eyes glowed. "Thank you, Father," he said.

Mrs. Thorpe too smiled stiffly, and her husband's expression gradually became more cheerful.

"But have a care now, John," he said. "Remember you have a wife and child."

"I shall not forget," said John briefly.

He took up his cloak and went out into the rain.

It seemed he was determined to send off the cloths to-morrow with the penny seals, and wanted to urge other Bradford clothiers to send theirs in the same way. It was very late that night before he returned, drenched to the skin; he had been down into Bradford and out as far as Manningham, and then back over the hills towards Halifax to North Oram and Coley, and he had found four Halifax clothiers, men of standing and good repute, who agreed to send off the kerseys which were to go to London to-morrow bearing only the penny seals. The pieces were to start from Halifax early in the morning, on pack-horses as usual, with two carriers in attendance, and John was to ride with the train till it was safely out of Yorkshire.

Accordingly we all rose very early next day, long before it was dawn. I gave John his breakfast by candlelight; as we sat I heard the horses stamping and blowing outside in the yard while Lister and the other two lads loaded them. To them it was a good joke to try to outwit the ulnager, but I was a little troubled, divided in my mind, about this matter of the ulnage. It seemed to me that since most commodities paid tax according to their weight, it

might well be the same with kerseys; if the cloths were much longer and heavier now than in the days when the tax was fixed, surely the tax should now be greater. But as regards the manner of the imposition of the tax, my mind was entirely with my husband. It was arbitrary, sudden and unlawful; to be commanded offhand, by an underling, to pay half as much tax again as formerly, without any official notice or Parliament discussion or opportunity for argument, was a thing intolerable to all free Englishmen. I agreed with John, too, that it was all of a piece with the King's tyranny, and ought to be resisted; nevertheless I was sorry that there was not a more lawful and peaceable manner of resistance. I was a little sorry, too, for I was always of a somewhat romantic disposition, that John's stand against tyranny should be concerned with money; Will's trouble about religion seemed to me nobler. But I could see that none of these thoughts troubled John, whose mind was set entirely on the idea of resistance, and I did not damp him by speaking of them, for I was glad to see him so fired and sure. Accordingly I helped him into his cloak and kissed him good-bye and wished him well with his enterprise, gravely but heartily.

It was five days before he returned to us, and during that time such rumours came to our ears as blanched Mrs. Thorpe's cheek and made poor Mr. Thorpe ill with anxiety. For my part I was not afraid, for I knew my husband; though stubborn he was quiet and decent in manner, and he had money behind him, and so was a man difficult to put down because he was so plainly a respectable law-abiding citizen. When, therefore, we heard that the pack-horse train had been set upon by the ulnagers, that there had been a fight and a man killed and all the carriers thrown in prison, I did not believe it, for I knew John would not countenance such violence. But I had hard work to convince John's parents. His mother, though she made no open lament, as it were shrank into herself; her shoulders bowed and she became suddenly an old woman; while poor Mr. Thorpe wept in my arms and worked himself

into a fever, so that we were obliged to put him to bed and send for the physician. To distract their thoughts, I told them that I was again with child. This pleased them greatly. Mr. Thorpe stretched out his hand from beneath the coverlet and patted my arm.

"You are a good girl, Penninah," he told me, weeping: "It has been pleasant at The Breck since you came here."

Mrs. Thorpe opened her lips stiffly to say: "You are a good wife to your husband." Her tone was somewhat grudging, but from her it was a great tribute.

I thanked her for it, calling her Mother, which I had never found it in my heart to do before.

It was while we were sitting thus in the Thorpes' bed-chamber, all somewhat moved and full of affection to one another, that I heard a horse in the yard below, and a shout from Lister, and John's footsteps. Giving the baby to his grandmother, I ran down and threw myself on John's breast.

"Well, well!" said John, much pleased. "This is a very warm welcome to a gaolbird."

"We thought you were dead," shrilled Lister cheerfully.

"Nonsense," said John. "Where is Thomas?"

I hurried him upstairs to his parents, explaining breathlessly as we went the fears roused in us by the many rumours. As we entered the room, Mrs. Thorpe rose to come to her son, and set Thomas on his feet beside her. The child swayed a moment, then ran full tilt across the room to his father. It was the first time he had walked alone.

"Eh! Bless him!" cried Mrs. Thorpe, throwing up her hands.

Thomas staggered and fell into his father's arms, who swung him up above his head and gently shook him. The child laughed and kicked delightedly.

"Well, my little son!" said John in a loving tone; and we fell to discussing the child's age and how he compared, in learning to walk, with other children.

"He was born the day my indentures terminated," cried Lister, sticking in his head.

"Fetch me a drink of ale, Lister," said John, to get rid of him.

But it was never easy to get rid of Lister, whose interest in all our doings was insatiable, so when he returned with the ale and seemed inclined to stay, John left private matters and began to tell us of his doings with the ulnagers.

The carriers had travelled through the first day of the journey without mishap, he said, and they all put up for the night at an inn in Wombwell, near Barnsley. The horses were stabled, and the packs of cloth stacked under cover at the side of the inn yard. He himself had not slept well, his mind being full of many matters, and while he was lying awake he heard sounds below him in the yard; he hurried down, and found Scaife and two other men tearing open the packs and scattering the pieces. He bade them desist, and when they would not, called for help; the carriers came running down and there was much shouting and pushing; the innkeeper and the other guests were roused, and seeing strangers attacking property in the yard, naturally took the carriers' side and routed the ulnagers. The innkeeper then fetched a lantern and John and the carriers began to sort out the cloths and replace them in the packs, but while they were busy with this, back came Scaife with the Constable of Wombwell, whereupon the innkeeper changed his tune. Scaife made out he was an officer of the Crown, being deputy ulnager, and had John and the carriers arrested, and took all the thirty-three kerseys from the packs into his possession.

At this a groan came from poor old Mr. Thorpe. I looked at him, and saw that his plump face was quite contorted with anxiety and fear, and his old hands quivering. I directed John's eyes to his father with a glance, and tried to urge him silently to give the old man reassurance.

"There is no need to trouble yourself, Father," said John shortly. "I have recovered all the cloths, and they have gone on to London——"

"Ah!" sighed Mr. Thorpe. He sank back and shut his eyes, relieved.

"Except those which were spoiled by being thrown about the inn yard," finished John.

"Spoiled? Spoiled?" exclaimed Mr. Thorpe in an agony, opening his rheumy eyes again.

The next day, went on John, he and the carriers had been taken before the magistrates. The carriers by his instructions disclaimed all responsibility for the seals on the cloths, and he himself had lodged a complaint against the ulnagers. There was no official warrant for the extra tax, he said; how were the clothiers to know that it was not a mere private exaction of Scaife's? The ulnagers had damaged the cloths by throwing them in the dust, and caused the clothiers to miss the next London market, and were now detaining property which was not their own. The magistrates began to look very doubtful at all this, and Scaife's manner, screaming and gabbling, had lowered his credit; the decision was put off till the next day, and then the next again, John and the carriers being allowed out of prison on John's bail, and then John shrewdly put in a claim against Scaife for their keep and that of the horses, and Scaife grew frightened; and what with one thing and another the magistrates had released them, horses and men and cloth, and here John was home again.

"Hast done well, lad," said Mr. Thorpe. He spoke feebly, for he seemed tired with the long tale. "But don't begin such a job again."

John set his lips. "Father, we shall bring a suit against the ulnagers," he said in his level steady tones.

Mr. Thorpe sighed. "Well, I suppose you'll do as you please," he said. "But don't let me hear owt of it; I'm too old."

John took him at his word, and never mentioned ulnage to him of his own accord again; but it was impossible for anyone living at The Breck to remain in comfortable ignorance of the matter, for to bring the suit properly before the Court of Exchequer cost time and money and an infinity of trouble. It was John who urged on the other clothiers, and revived their determination when it flagged;

he rode hither and thither, and wrote many letters, and received many clothiers at The Breck. Many times he was vexed—with the clothiers, with the rules of the Court, with the lawyer who was drawing up the bill of complaint—and when John was vexed everyone in The Breck knew it. Not that he ever vented his anger unjustly on us, or fell into a temper, or scolded warmly, like Will; when he was vexed John grew merely very quiet and grim. But he was pretty much master at The Breck now, Mr. Thorpe failing so rapidly; and when the master of a house has a brow like a thundercloud—dear John!—there is little sunshine in the sky for the rest of its inhabitants. I was not afraid of him in these moods, but I knew it was no use to notice them or to try to coax him out of them; I just went quietly on in my usual way, and Mrs. Thorpe did the same. But Mr. Thorpe suffered greatly from John's disappointments; ever a cheerful man and fond of jokes, he could not endure gloom and silence, and when he saw a cloud on John's forehead, he seemed to think he could dissipate it by asking questions. As John's answers grew shorter and shorter, the poor old man's face grew longer and longer, until his distress was quite affecting. He was greatly troubled, too, by the difficulties of getting seals from the ulnagers; the pile of unsold pieces mounted and mounted in the loom-chamber, Scaife refusing John seals unless he paid the extra halfpenny, and John refusing to pay it. I found Mr. Thorpe gazing in on them, one afternoon when John was in Halifax, his lame foot propped up on a piece, shaking his old head heavily.

"We shall be ruined, Penninah, ruined!" said he. "Your son will have to beg his bread from door to door."

"I have been young and now am old," sang out Lister from the loom: "But never saw I yet the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging their bread."

"You are not old, Lister," said Mr. Thorpe reprovingly. "You are not old, and you have seen it."

He shook his head mournfully, and I knew he was thinking of my father's children.

"Holy Writ cannot lie," cried Lister.

Mr. Thorpe's face twitched. "Obstinate, pig-headed fellow!" he whispered in my ear. "But he's a good weaver. But what's the use of weaving," he wailed aloud: "If the pieces are to rot unsold? We shall be ruined, Penninah, ruined!"

I coaxed him back to the hearth, for the day was cold and the place where he stood draughty, and reassured him; but he wept on my shoulder, wiping his eyes with a trembling hand, so that it was pitiful to see him.

That night I told John that I really feared for his father's health if the kerseys were not disposed of. John was quite astounded; it seemed he had no notion of his father's trouble, and he was very sorry for it.

Next day Mr. Thorpe kept his bed with a cold, his foot pained him greatly and he seemed very low; towards evening he startled me by twice addressing me as Sybil. For a moment I could not think who Sybil could be; then I remembered it was his sister, Mrs. Ferrand. It was Tuesday, Market Day in Leeds, and John was late in returning. When at last he came in, Thomas had long been asleep in his cradle, Mrs. Thorpe was upstairs with her husband, and I was sitting sewing by the fire. John over his supper explained to me with a cheerful look that he had that day arranged to send his cloths to another clothier's, Isaac Baume, a neighbour of ours in Little Holroyd, to be sealed. This Baume had paid the extra halfpenny for quietness' sake, but he was on John's side in the ulnage business, and he had promised to get the seals for the Thorpe cloth without revealing whose it was, so that John's resistance would not be compromised. It was a trick, said John, and as such distasteful to him, but for his father's sake he would stomach it for a time.

Mrs. Thorpe came downstairs as he was speaking.

"It will not be for long," concluded John. "The Exchequer suit will surely come on soon."

"However soon it comes," said Mrs. Thorpe: "It will be too late for your father."

John stared.

"What do you mean, Mother?" he said.

"What I say," replied Mrs. Thorpe stolidly.

"Don't talk in riddles, Mother," said John. "Is my father very ill?"

"He won't last the week," said Mrs. Thorpe briefly.

She had ever a horrid prescience of misfortune. Mr. Thorpe was already in a fever; the gout in his foot, as the physician now called it, had struck in, and in the next few days he slipped down the last slope rapidly. By the following morning he already seemed far away from us; it was impossible to tell whether he even understood the explanation about the cloth seals which John eagerly gave him, for he only murmured: "Aye. Well," and moved his head restlessly. I urged John to send for Mrs. Ferrand, and he promised to do so; but Mrs. Thorpe constantly postponed the message, saying it was too soon. At last on Friday morning I could bear it no longer, for Mr. Thorpe's eyes seemed to me to wander continually over us in search of someone who was not there; John was out, so I went into the loom-chamber and bade Lister send one of the boys over to Holroyd Hall. But Lister scowled and rolled his eyes, and amid a shower of Scripture texts informed me he took orders only from Mester John; so I took a cloak from behind the door and went to Holroyd Hall myself by the lane.

It was a bitter winter's day, the sky grey and lowering, the ground iron-hard, snow-showers driving across the hills. The servant who opened to me at the Hall did not know me, and left me standing at the door, and there was a good deal of colloquy within before Mrs. Ferrand at length came out to me. I was shocked to see the ravages time and grief had made on her face; she was pinched and haggard, and the lip-salve and cosmetic ointments she used to conceal it only emphasised the decay of her beauty.

"What do you want here, Penninah Thorpe?" she shrilled, even in her anger swallowing her r's.

She gave me a glance of hatred; it was bitter to her, perhaps, to see me in my young prime, bearing a child,

while her own youth and her own son were far away. I felt this, and answered her gently, telling her of Mr. Thorpe's danger and his desire to see her.

"I must go, I suppose," she answered pettishly. "I will ask Giles. I will follow."

I urged her not to delay too long, and left her.

While I was absent, John came back to The Breck. When he found that I had gone out on such a morning on such an errand in my condition, he fell into such a wild anger, and raged so at Mrs. Thorpe and Lister, as they had never seen or heard the like of before. I found them thus when I returned: John with his hands clenched and his head lowered, throwing out bitter words, trembling with fury; Mrs. Thorpe and Lister staring at him aghast, quite pale and frightened.

"I am quite unharmed, John," I said, throwing off my cloak, which glistened with snow-flakes. "Your aunt is coming shortly."

But he was not to be soothed; he would have me take off my shoes, and dry myself by the fire, and meanwhile went on covering Lister and his mother with reproaches, so that I was very glad when the entrance of Mr. and Mrs. Ferrand put a stop to it. The greetings between the Thorpes and the Ferrands were cold; then Mrs. Ferrand went up to her brother, and Mr. Ferrand planted himself with his back to the fire, refusing a chair, and stood there swaying on his heels and frowning. John offered him wine, but he refused.

"Is your father truly ill?" he asked.

"He is dying," replied John.

"These were the only words exchanged below-stairs; we could hear Mr. Thorpe's voice and his sister's, were talking very earnestly. Then Mrs. Ferrand came with her eyes red with weeping, and she took her husband's hand and urged him to the door, and they left thus, without word spoken.

Thorpe died that night. The funeral took place on Monday; the Ferrands attended at Bradford Church

and the graveside, but would not come to the breakfast we offered afterwards at The Breck. Mr. Thorpe had been well liked by those who knew him, and many Bradford people came to the church, but I was surprised to see how much smaller was the gathering than that which attended my father. I was even a little bitter about it in my heart, for it is too late to show a man affection when he is in his grave, and if Bradford clothiers loved my father, they might have shown it by helping him, a little sooner.

When all our guests, even Will and Eliza, had gone, and we were sitting about the hearth together—rather stiff and uncomfortable, between grief and decorum and relief—Lister suddenly poked his head in at the door.

"Mester John," he cried: "Have you heard what folk are saying in Bradford?"

"What are they saying?" said John heavily.

"A gentleman has refused to pay Ship-money, and there's to be a case at law," cried Lister triumphantly. "His name's John Hampden—he lives down in Buckinghamshire—he was a member of the last Parliament—he's refused to pay Ship-money and there's to be a trial about it."

A strange look came over John's face at this, and his dark eyes glowed.

"*Crescit sub pondere virtus*," said David thoughtfully. "Resistance grows beneath oppression."

"Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us," shrilled Lister.

John was silent, but he smiled to himself. I guessed what he was thinking, and approved, for indeed he had a right to think it: namely that Hampden was not the only man in England to refuse unlawful taxes, nor Buckinghamshire the first county to show a spirit of resistance to oppression. I was right in my guess, for after a moment John muttered, very quietly, so that I was the only one to hear:

"Cloth and ships are just the same."

WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN
HAPPY IF . . .

ALL THROUGH MY life it has been made clear to me that not only the proper, but the wise conduct is to do what is right and leave the consequence to God, rather than aim at a right result through dubious means. For no action ever produces quite the results we expect, and so we cannot count on the end of any action, but only on the means employed to gain it. How greatly an event differs from our expectations of it has often amazed me, and never more so than in the matter of the effect of the death of her husband on Mrs. Thorpe.

I had never thought Mrs. Thorpe a very loving wife. She was superior in mind and spirit to her husband, and knew it very well; she had for Mr. Thorpe the kindness of habit, but not much respect and no great passion. He on his part relied much on her strength and judgment, but fretted a little under her domination. Theirs was a marriage made by parents; they had rubbed along well enough with a decent affection on both sides, but were not intimate in spirit. All Mrs. Thorpe's love was given to John, and for him indeed she had the passion of a tigress. She would cheerfully have seen John's father, his wife, his sister, his apprentices and indeed all Bradford burned at the stake to save him from an ache in the little finger. To do her justice, for the same end she would have suffered at the stake herself.

She was not, therefore, greatly distressed when Mr. Thorpe lay dying; indeed at times I thought her manner barely decent, she seemed as if she looked forward to the end of a long bondage and could scarcely restrain her joy. Neither would John, I thought, regret his father overmuch;

and I felt sorry for the cheerful little man, who had always been kind to my family and me. I had, too, a selfish feeling of which I was ashamed, that in losing Mr. Thorpe I lost a friend, and that in future I should be alone, as it were, against an alliance of Mrs. Thorpe and John. I was ashamed of this but could not help it, and I seemed to see a spark of triumph in Mrs. Thorpe's eye, as if she thought it too.

But the event proved totally otherwise. Mrs. Thorpe being wearied with night-watching—for she had nursed her husband well, doing her duty soberly and carefully as always hitherto—rested a day or two in bed after his death. It was pleasant for us younger people to be together without any of the older generation, and by the time Mrs. Thorpe came down to us again, her presence was felt even by John to be a slight constraint. Then, too, it gradually became clear that Mrs. Thorpe herself was changed. She seemed bemused and dazed, uncertain of what she intended and unequal to the effort of decision. I was most careful to leave all the management of the house to her, as before, but she confused her orders, and once or twice things were forgotten and John was vexed. Then she burst out in a loud wail:

“It is Penninah's work to see to that!”

At first John, though he said nothing, seemed inclined to blame me, but when this had happened several times he avoided his mother's eye and pursed his lips, and at length said sharply:

“If it is Penninah's work, leave it to her and do not meddle with it.”

After this, quietly and as occasion offered I took the management of the house upon myself. Mrs. Thorpe seemed hardly to notice, certainly not to care; I was amazed at the change in her. Perhaps it was because she had always been the centre of Mr. Thorpe's life and now found herself the centre of nobody's life, and so missed her husband more than she expected; or perhaps, as I sometimes pityingly surmised, some spring had broken in her heart when John had shouted at her for letting me go to Holroyd Hall in a

snowstorm. But however it was, she fell into a kind of dejection, and sat for hours by the hearth, grumbling to anyone who passed through the house that we neglected her. Her only pleasure seemed to be in eating and drinking, and when I discovered this, I very gladly brought her dainties to the fireside, which pleased her but vexed my husband, who had a great liking for decency and order.

When the spring came, and the sky grew bright and the air mild, Mrs. Thorpe revived somewhat in spirit; and her next fancy was to go to Adel, to Will and Eliza, for a few weeks' visit. She made out that Eliza was still delicate after a miscarriage she had, and needed her mother. It was true that Eliza had suffered a miscarriage, over which she and Will were greatly disappointed, but it had happened in the previous year, and Mrs. Thorpe had not shown much trouble at the time. John was vexed that his mother should want to go just now, for he wished her to be with me during my approaching lying-in, since there was no other woman living in the house; and I did not know what to say to him about it, for I guessed it was precisely for this reason that Mrs. Thorpe wished to leave us. She dreaded the bustle and work and responsibility of a birth and a newborn child, and no longer had the will to force herself to do her duty. Will and Eliza showed but a temperate enthusiasm for the plan, but she was insistent, and eventually John took her over to Adel when he was going to Leeds one Market Day. He said he would hire a little maid for the housework, and arrange that Sarah Denton should come and stay at The Breck while I was in bed, bringing her little daughter, who was about of an age with our Thomas, with her. The maid came; she was willing enough, and the arrangement would have worked well enough save that I was very easily tired just then because of my condition. John grieved so when he saw me overdone that I felt constrained to conceal it from him, and I began to long very greatly for the birth to be over. Then, just the week before it was due, news came by the carrier from Adel that Mrs. Thorpe was ill and calling for her son.

Poor John was quite distracted. He paced the house-room with his hands clasped behind him under his doublet, occasionally cocking an angry eye at the letter from Will, which lay on the table. I urged him to go to Adel immediately; the road lay up Church Bank, and he could call at Sarah Denton's on his way and send her to me.

"I hate to leave you now, Penninah," said he gruffly.

"We are young and have all our lives before us; Mrs. Thorpe is old and has little time left," I said. And I continued to urge him, for I thought it his plain duty to go; since I had a son of my own, I understood better how Mrs. Thorpe felt to her son. Though I own I was frightened at the notion of his departure, because from some signs within me I believed my pains would soon begin.

At last, though very unwillingly, he left me; and sure enough he had hardly turned the corner into the lane when I felt the onset of my labour. I sent David off in a hurry for the midwife, but my pains came on so rapidly that I feared the child would be born before she arrived. I made what preparations I could and went to bed; I was obliged to keep a calm demeanour to soothe the maid, who wept, and Lister, who was in a desperate taking—he flapped about the room like a bird of ill omen, waving his arms and calling on the Lord, the sweat standing in beads on his face as he wailed that Mester John would never forgive him. I could not but smile at his fluster, though somewhat wryly; certainly I echoed his fervent "Praise the Lord!" on the arrival of the midwife.

And so my second son, Samuel, was born. Feeling low in spirit at the time, owing to John's absence and the general commotion, I inclined to weep over him because he had such a poor welcome into the world; but I need not have distressed myself. Sam was not of the soft kind, who depend on other people's welcome; he had a robust and stolid spirit, and was not easily disconcerted. It has ever been deeply interesting to me to see the traits of the fathers reappear, mingled and differently proportioned, in the children, and my own two eldest children as they grew furnished prime

examples. Thomas had his father's dark hair and eyes and a Thorpe name, but a courteous gracious manner, a fluent speech, and a generous disposition, like my father. Sam resembled the Clarksons, Will and David and my father, in body, being lanky as a child, with grey eyes and sandy hair; he had John's habit of reserve but not his gravity, being given to sudden unexpected jokes, like those of his Grandfather Thorpe, though the wit in them was of a keener quality, and he had his Grandfather Thorpe's shrewdness also about money and cloth. As a baby he was homely and cheerful, not beautiful like our little Thomas but very healthy and fresh-looking.

I needed the comfort his shrewd little face and upstanding tuft of hair gave me, at the time of his birth, for his father was absent from home no less than three weeks, and I could see from the troubled faces of those about me that there was news from Adel which they dared not tell. At last one day I called in Lister and took a very high tone with him, threatening to weep myself sick if he did not at once tell me what he knew. I did not need to counterfeit tears, being sorely troubled; and Lister, writhing his knotty fingers and pulling at his carroty hair, cried out hurriedly that there was no bad news of the master or the Reverend and Mrs. Clarkson, but Mrs. Thorpe was dead of the plague.

"The plague?" I whispered, terrified.

"Aye," said Lister gloomily. "It seems it is bad in Leeds this year."

I was still gaping at him in horror, leaning up on one elbow and breathing heavily, when the door opened and John came in. I cried out and stretched out my arms to him, and he came swiftly and fell on his knees beside the bed. As he put his arms round me tears suddenly flowed from his eyes down his cheeks; it moved me greatly to see a man, and one so strong and taciturn as John, thus weeping. Lister with his usual lack of manners stood grinning at us while I took John's head on my breast and stroked his hair and showed him his second son, but I forgave Lister that time, for I knew his discourtesy sprang only from his love

for John, and when he muttered: "O praise the Lord with me!" I accepted his admonition and gave thanks to God silently for His great goodness. Soon David coming home from school burst into the room, smiling all over his gentle face at John's return; and Sarah came and gazed at us from the doorway, her arms akimbo; and we were all very happy together.

It is idle to pretend that I was not happier at The Breck after the death of Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe than before. It is a strange thing to say, but all the rooms of the house suddenly seemed to me lighter. I am ashamed to remember this, but it is true. John being wealthier now that his mother's jointure had not to be paid, he hired two stout serving-maids to do the work of the house, so that both I was more free to look after the children and we lived with a little more dignity than before. My house was now my own, and I took great pride and pleasure in making it a place of comfort and beauty; my children were my own, to care for and train as I would; my husband's heart had perhaps always been my own, but it was now more plainly and clearly mine than before. We lived as we chose, and there was no one to scold us for doing so, and it was very pleasant to us.

Indeed I do not know how John would have managed if his father and mother had been still with us, for old people have a dislike to irregularities in the hours of rising and eating and sleeping, and these John was now forced into on account of the ulnage suit. This was now opened in the Court of Exchequer, and commissioners were sent down from London to Halifax and Leeds to sit and hear evidence. John himself gave evidence at Leeds, but this was the smallest part of the business for him; he was forever riding about the county, finding suitable witnesses and stirring them up to come before the commissioners. About this time the Ship-money suit was decided against John Hampden, the judges having been corrupted by the King. A very dark look came over my John's face when he heard this, and he set his jaw in a way he had; from that time onward he worked harder than ever about the ulnage, barely giving himself time to

eat and sleep. Thanks to his zeal, merchants from York and customs officers from Hull as well as all manner of clothiers and chapmen from the West Riding came forward and gave testimony, and eventually Metcalfe, after he had spent a great deal of money on the case, desisted from it and accepted the penny seal as of old. John was overjoyed by this result and proud of it, as he had every right to be, for he felt that a blow had been struck for the rights of Englishmen, the oppressor had been shown that the free spirit of England was alive and strong.

On account of this suit, the clothiers of the neighbourhood began to regard John as a very rising young man, and consult him often, in which also he could not but take pride. Meanwhile he never ceased to give the most careful attention to his own cloth, while he was at home, and Lister obeyed his orders regarding it with the utmost strictness, when he was away, so that our cloth grew to be renowned for its steady good quality, and trade was very brisk at The Breck, and money plentiful. I never cared much for money, having been brought up by my father to value the things of the spirit more highly than material comforts, but it was good to be able to put by sums so that our children might go to the University, and to give abundantly where charity was required.

It was now that I discovered that John was more parsimoniously inclined than I. Hitherto I had believed his care in money matters due to the strictness of his parents, but I found that now their authority was removed, he still was apt to frown a little sometimes over my charities, and to ask me, not as jokingly as I could wish, to account strictly for some few pence he had given me the week before. I must confess I found this irksome, and tending to diminish a little the respect I had for my husband; but I told myself that we all have faults, I myself being by no means deficient in them, and I learned to accommodate myself to John's wishes on this point. He did not press it over far, for in truth I was not extravagant; and this was the only disagreement between us.

We should have been happy indeed if the times had been peaceful.

As it was, often in my sweetest moments, when I played on the grass before the house with Thomas and Sam, the keen wind tossing our hair, or sat with John at night by our own fireside, or watched David bending his gentle face serenely over his books in the candlelight, suddenly a cold shadow chilled my heart, and I asked myself what it was, and remembered the King and his instruments of tyranny. Thomas would run to show me a fine daisy he had found, or Sam from his high chair stretch out his hand and call imperiously "Mummmum," as children do when they are learning to say Mother (a very sweet word to any woman), and I would think: "Why is it not right for me to be happy? I should be happy." And then I would remember the persecution of the faithful and the injustice and cruelty stalking the land, and I would catch my children to my breast in fear for them, and suffer. For now that John's time and money were at his own disposal, he bought books and pamphlets and diurnals, and read them to me at night, so that we both kept well informed of all that was going on in the country, and it was very grievous.

The results of all the oppression and evil-doing were beginning, as they say, to come home to roost. The Scots were so enraged by Laud's forcing the Prayer-Book and Bishops and all his Arminian paraphernalia on them that they revolted, and took an oath they called the Covenant, to be true to the Church of Scotland, and when the King would not give in to them, they appointed a commander-in-chief and began to drill, and presently set out to invade England.

Yorkshire being a northern county, our Trained-Bands were all called out to go against the Scots, and there were such grumblings about this as I never heard before. The gentry were reluctant to pay the Coat and Conduct money for the Train-Bands, as people called them for short, for they had already contributed overmuch to the King; whereupon Strafford, who was at York managing the business, shouted at them that they were mutinous, and must learn

to obey orders. This was very ill taken, for Yorkshire folk, whether gentle or simple, do not like to be ordered about; they are a stiff-necked, self-opinionated people, very warm-hearted, and ready to follow to the death when their own loyalty, freely given, leads them, but stubborn as a rock if you try to drive them against their will. Strafford's insolence vexed the gentry, so that they took a delight in provoking him—his own kinsman, that Sir William Savile who was partly Mr. Ferrand's landlord, refused to take a troop of horse he had raised to York to be trained, merely because Strafford had ordered it so. Amongst the Train-Band men themselves the grumbling was even louder. Sarah's husband, Denton, was one of them, and as Lister now regularly frequented their house, having taken a great fancy to Sarah's little daughter when she visited at The Breck, we heard often what was said amongst the Train-Bands. They called this war against Scotland a "Bishops' War," and as the greater part of them detested Bishops heartily, they did not see why they should go to war to force something on Scotland which they hated themselves. There was some talk in the West Riding of the Train-Band men refusing to go at all, but when they found that old Lord Fairfax's son Ferdinando was to command them, and his grandson Thomas Fairfax was raising a special troop of horse, they obeyed the summons, though very reluctantly. These Train-Band men were away six months, during which time poor Sarah was hard put to it to make ends meet for herself and her children, and we had to help them, the Train-Bands being so greatly behind in their pay. Only their loyalty to the Fairfaxes and a natural disinclination to desert kept the men together, Denton said when at last he got home; and as far as he could see they might just as well not have gone at all, for they did nothing but march backwards and forwards on the Border, under confused instructions, half-starved and without proper tents, and the moment the Scots appeared they all ran away. The only good, indeed the only thing at all, which came out of it as far as he could see, said Denton, was a knighthood for young Thomas Fairfax, and he wished him joy of it.

The King made a very humiliating peace with Scotland, so that John was divided between irritation as an Englishman, and rejoicing as a Puritan. But very soon happenings both in London and Bradford threw him entirely on the Scottish side. For at that time things constantly happened so; there was an event in the distance, which roused your wondering anger that such things could be, and before you had ceased to wonder the same kind of event took place right on your doorstep. Or there was an oppression in Bradford, and then you read of the same kind of oppression in Norfolk or in London, far away. It was a sign of the times: England was slowly and with anguish as it were tearing herself into halves, and this division was taking place all over the kingdom, till at last it was not possible for any village, however tiny, to remain at one with itself, or for any man, however wavering, not to know his mind and take his side.

The King, short of money after his campaign against the Scots—it was said that getting the Train-Bands together and disbanding them again cost him upwards of three hundred thousand pounds—called a Parliament, and one of the members made a grand speech in which he said that the Parliament was to the nation what the soul is to the body; but before we had time to begin to feel hopeful again, the King dissolved the Parliament because it did not behave as he wished, and almost at once fresh rulings came out from Archbishop Laud. Every minister was commanded to read aloud at morning prayer, every so often, an announcement about the Divine Right of Kings, and teach their congregations to honour and obey the King as the representative of God; all ministers and schoolmasters were ordered to take an oath that they would never try to alter the government of the Church as at present established; as for congregations, there were so many bowings and scrapings and observances commanded to them, that they would not have time to think of God or their soul in church, but only of when to be bowing next.

Our ministers in Yorkshire would not yield to all this,

and some of them were silenced and lost their place. Indeed many godly men and women, fearing the light of the gospel would be totally put out, went away across the sea to New England, where they would be free to worship as they chose; the elder of Lister's two minister uncles was one of these. I feared for Will again, but under Lord Fairfax he stayed safe.

In Bradford we had been unlucky enough to lose our good old Mr. Okell a few months before, and a creature of Laud's was appointed to the church, Corker by name. This man roused a profound disgust in me the first time I saw him, and nothing I knew of him afterwards ever mitigated my distaste. He was a lisping, hectoring man, with curled hair that looked as though it rarely knew the comb, and a huge sprawling collar of dirty lacc. His nose was red and spongy-looking and much swollen; when I innocently enquired of John whether this was due to disease he laughed, and mimed a man drinking deep from a bottle. That such a man should presume to instruct decent and sober people in religion, prescribe what we were to think and how we were to move, was an offence before God and an insult to his congregation. I was amazed that such a man could be an ordained minister, for we had not been used to such men, even among Arminians. But it is ever so when there is a persecution; only evil men will lend themselves to it, so the good men are forced out of office, and the persecution is by so much the worse.

It was indeed a time of mourning both in politics and religion, and our people kept it so, humbling themselves before Almighty God in prayer that His anger should pass from them. I remember, with much respect for their ardour and sincerity, though they appear old-fashioned nowadays, the wrestlings with God which took place in the West Riding at that time. Godly ministers appointed many fasts, and kept them with prayer and preaching, either in their own churches, or sometimes in private houses; the minister at Pudsey, and our Will, were very notable in these. Will would sometimes come to The Breck at John's request to

keep a day of humiliation with us. I have known him spend six or seven hours in praying and preaching, without any cessation; or sometimes he would intermit for one quarter of an hour, while a few verses of a psalm were sung, and then pray and preach again; all this time fasting.

John and I and Lister kept these fasts with strictness; David too did not spare himself. I was sorry for this, as I thought a young growing lad ought not to fast, and for this reason, as well as because of David's long expectation, I was glad that the time had now come for him to go to Cambridge.

It was needful to make preparations for his going, and, mindful of my husband's carefulness with money, so that there should be no discontents in the matter I asked John what sum he was prepared to lend David, for repayment when the lad should have found a place. At this John coloured and exclaimed, and told me, speaking hotly, that he had not deserved this of me, he regarded David as his dear brother and all that he had was his, and he wished the boy to be well furnished, so that he should labour under no disadvantage among his fellows at the University. I saw that he was wounded, and was sorry, and laid my hand on his arm and told him so and expressed my grateful sense of his generosity.

"It is not generosity," said John crossly. "David is my brother."

So then I asked him, in a tone as if seeking his advice, what sum he thought should be enough to provide the necessary linen; he paused and thought, and then named a sum which, though substantial, was not lavish. Within myself I smiled a little, and was sad a little too; this was ever John's weakness, I told myself—but after all it was a less disastrous one than my father's too careless considering of his accounts. I told both John and David the sum was ample, and by careful management made it suffice; some women I believe would have contrived to supplement it by money from the oats or the eggs, but I could not bring myself to stoop to robbing my husband to give to my

brother, nor could David have borne it to be so if I had. It was a great pleasure to me to sew shirts and napkins for David, and knit him stockings, and see the lad's face grow brighter every day with expectation.

At last the day came for him to set out; the dear lad was as white as one of his new sheets with excitement, with a look on his face as if he were going to heaven. When it came to saying farewell we were both much moved, and held each other close; we had not been parted since the day of David's birth, and I could not but remember the day he first came to The Breck, a chubby baby with rosy cheeks and candid blue eyes, not much older than my little Thomas there. And now he was a man, very tall and learned, and going to the University all those miles away, alone. I stood at the door of The Breck, watching him ride away, waving to him whenever he turned in the saddle to look back at me. Then he passed out of sight down the lane, and I turned indoors and went upstairs to my own chamber, and sat there for a long time, very quiet, remembering my sorrow before God and thinking how much of a woman's life consisted in saying farewell to those she loved.

When I heard John's voice calling me and went down, the dinner was served and my husband and sons were standing about the table waiting, and as I came in they all turned their eyes on me and their faces fell, for they saw I had been weeping; and just for one brief bitter moment I felt that they were all Thorpes and had nothing to do with me, and that I had lost the only person I really loved. But then I felt sorry for them, smiling a little to myself because they were all so downcast, and I spoke out openly and said that I had been weeping because Uncle David had gone away, but all the same I was glad because he was going to a University, a fine place. Then Thomas asked what a University was, and I began to tell him as well as I could, and he listened very intently, without moving, his dark eyes very wide and bright, and John, though he bade the child eat his dinner while it was hot, was pleased by his interest, for he always intended that Thomas should be a University

man; and so the moment passed, and they became my dear ones again.

It was not long before a letter came for me from David, and after that we heard from him very regularly. He wrote copious and pleasant letters, full of those small particulars which bring a matter very clearly before the mental eyes. I could not understand all the terms he used, nor could John, though he always read David's letters over several times, with great care and pleasure; and sometimes we asked David for an explanation of something he had said, and when the explanations came, we found our own imagining of it had been quite mistaken. But the reality was always more interesting and beautiful than our imaginings, for everything David told us fitted into a picture of something fine and high, serene and mellow: a clear quiet river, smooth grass very green, trees wonderfully tall and straight and leafy, venerable buildings of pale grey stone set out in quadrangles, where scholars with wise old wrinkled faces paced slowly in their gowns, disputing learnedly upon some point of grammar or philosophy. Clare Hall was being rebuilt at this time, and David, dear lad, described the new fabrics to us almost stone by stone, so that I could see the stately gracious court, the fluted ceilings and fans of shallow steps, the trefoiled windows, the new bridge, gently curved, with its fourteen rounded balls of stone. I had a picture in my mind of David leaning on the parapet of this lovely bridge, musing on some high truth as he looked down into the gentle sunny stream, or up at the slender gracious airy lines of his beloved Clare. I had another picture of him standing beside the carved bookcases of which he spoke so much, holding on one hand, as scholars do, a fine old volume backed in smooth white vellum, turning the pages with loving reverent fingers. In these pictures David always wore his dreamy, lofty smile and the sun shone on him; for that he was happy in Cambridge, that he had found his place there and was in the sun, his powers daily growing as his sweet soul sucked its true nurture, there could be no doubt. All the reports we heard of him gave his scholarship the highest

praise; his letters were radiant with content and growing strength. This was a great joy, a great consolation, to me.

At that time I found myself in need of some such consolation. David's going had taken a great deal from my life, and as it chanced, that same year my two sons began to go to Bradford School. Thomas was a little above the usual entrance age, Sam below, but Thomas being slight and gentle and Sam tall and brisk made their readiness for school about the same, and it was better for them to go up and down to Bradford together, with one of our new apprentices to take care of both. At school we found they bore themselves very creditably, for they were both good boys, decent in thought and manner, truthful, honest, affectionate; Thomas loved his book, Sam had some prowess in sports and games. I felt a natural pride and satisfaction to see my sons thus ushered into the outer world and well received there, but the weaker part of my nature mourned their going. They were no longer babies, completely dependent on me for their whole being; they were boys, of whose life I was only a part, taking my place amongst tops and marbles and Aesop's Fables and Mr. Worrall. They still loved me dearly, they cried "Mother!" and ran for me whenever anything out of the ordinary occurred, good or bad, but they had their boyish secrets and reserves—I came upon them sometimes with their heads very close, talking earnestly, and then they sprang up and laughed mischievously, and bounded away without offering to tell me why they had been in such close conference. This was all very natural and proper, and I did not regret it, for I did not wish my sons to be tied to their mother's apron-strings, as I suspected John had been to Mrs. Thorpe's; but it was natural too that I should miss my dear lads' close companionship, and feel a little sadness that I was no longer their all in all, but only one person amongst others, and my love taken for granted.

Indeed at this time I was often dejected about my place at The Breck; I seemed no longer myself, Penninah, but only "Wife" and "Mother" and "Mistress," as if my own

life were finished and I just a staid old woman in the background of other people's lives. Doubtless all women feel this to some degree at some time, and I told myself that he that loseth his life shall find it, that I lived again in my children, and so on; but it was perhaps especially difficult to conquer this feeling then because of the troublous nature of the times.

For the happiness of my married life had become—I will not say faded or withered, since John's love for me was still strong and steady, but a little nipped, a little chilled, beneath the continual blasts of perpetual disturbance. Few were the evenings when John and I could sit quietly by our own hearth, with our children about us, enjoying the sweet peace of family life. There was always bad news to cloud our content. Sometimes it was religious, and then we felt it our duty to remember our trouble before God in fasting and prayer; sometimes it was political, and then John paced the house with such a gloomy brow that the children hushed their play. Indeed once, John coming in with a hasty step and a black look and going straight up to the loom-chamber without a word to us, Thomas laid down his abacus and came to my chair and enquired seriously:

“What has the King done to-day, mother?”

I smiled, but was sad too; for once again I saw the shadow fall across my children's future, once again I must try to console and support my husband. And this last was not as easy as it had been. The impossibility of influencing events, the total impotence of a Little Holroyd clothier in affairs of state, fretted John intolerably; he could not bear to sit still and see things done which he knew so clearly to be wrong. He did his best in matters which came within his reach; he set on foot a petition against the schoolmaster Worrall and another against the horrid vicar, Corker; he was earnest with Bradford clothiers in discussion, he wrote letters on behalf of displaced ministers, he fasted rigorously and spent himself in prayer. But all this was not enough, not nearly enough, to satisfy his fever to be active against oppression. So he grew daily more restless, and even at times morose. It was right that he should act as he did, and I

supported him and urged him to it; but there never came any good issue to these affairs he undertook, there was only the wearisome grinding, ever renewed, of powerful oppression; and John disappointed, and I myself trying to console him and disappointed too because my consolations seemed to lack the power they had formerly held over him. I reproached myself for minding this, and tried to take some amusement in the reflection that when John's attention had been wholly on me, in the early days of our marriage, I longed for it to be diverted, while now that it was diverted, I wished it back on me again. But I could not find this very comical.

It was the continual repetition of troubles which wore so upon our spirits. Prices went up and down and up and down, according as the Scots were on the march or no; the cloth market freshened and slackened, freshened and slackened, according as the King and Strafford gave up a tax or thought of a new one. The King did not keep the promises he made to the Scots in the late treaty—"Whocver thought he would? No Stuart ever kept his word to his own disadvantage," growled John—and so we had another Scottish invasion. There was the same vehement bullying by Strafford at York again, and the same grumblings amongst the Train-Band men, and the same success of the Scots, and the same humiliation in the terms of peace; the same lack of money, and the same enforced decision of the King to call another Parliament—I felt quite sick with exasperation at having to trace this same wretched road again, where everything bad was present just as before, only rather worse.

If I felt an irritation thus, naturally John, who had all the cares of trade on his shoulders, felt it much more, and we often found ourselves, not quarrelling, for we had too great a respect for each other to do that, but carefully restraining ourselves to a quiet speech and a sober mien while we really longed to fly out and speak our mind in burning words. This restraint grew increasingly irksome.

Thus was the happiness of our home dimmed and chilled by the national dissension.

“THEN WERE THE PEOPLE DIVIDED”

EVIDENTLY A GREAT many other people besides ourselves were feeling this same exasperation, for when the newly-elected Parliament met the members showed a most irritated and determined temper against the King. They appointed many Committees to enquire into abuses, from Starchamber downwards, attacked Archbishop Laud and accused Lord Strafford of high treason. Best of all, they passed a Bill saying that a Parliament must be held at least every three years and that this one should not be dismissed without its own consent.

When the King, in his extremity because of the Scots, reluctantly put his hand to this, the bells were rung in London for joy, and John, not to be outdone, decided to celebrate the Parliament's success by a bonfire. He spent much time that afternoon gathering wood, with the children helping him, and built a fine pile on the knoll at the side of The Breck, and he invited the Baumes, and some other of our Little Holroyd neighbours, to come and see it lighted as soon as it was dark. The children were greatly excited, being allowed to stay up to see it, and indeed it was a fine sight, the flames rising high, very red and leaping.

While we were all standing there admiring these flames, talking and laughing rather loudly as people do at bonfires, we heard a shouting from the other side of the beck, though we could not see anyone, the flames throwing a deep shadow in that direction. John thought he heard his name called, and he thrust a branch-end into the fire to get it alight and went towards the beck carrying it shoulder-high as a torch, and we all followed him. Sure enough there were

several men standing on the Holroyd Hall side of the beck, amongst them Mr. Ferrand.

"If you want any help, John Thorpe," Mr. Ferrand was calling: "I'll gladly come and lend a hand with a bucket."

"Help with a bucket?" said John, taken by surprise.

"Aye," said Mr. Ferrand smoothly. "Your house is afire, I take it?"

His voice, and some smothered laughs from his guests, showed his mocking intention.

John coloured. "This is a bonfire for joy, Uncle Giles," said he, very stolidly as his manner was when he was vexed or disconcerted.

"Joy?" said Mr. Ferrand, his voice sharpening.

"Aye, joy. The Parliament have got the staff out of the King's hands, and he'll never get it back again," John told him. "We think it worth a bonfire, Uncle."

"Thou prating traitor!" shouted Mr. Ferrand in a fury. "You'll be sorry for this one day, John Thorpe."

"Not as sorry as His Majesty," John called back cheerfully.

Mr. Ferrand danced with rage and shook his fist and swore at him, so that our children, who never heard anything of that kind, were shocked and frightened; but John smiled quietly to himself, and went on feeding the bonfire. I was sorry in a way that he should give such rude replies to a known supporter of the King and his own uncle, and yet I could not help feeling glad of it, for the words expressed the bitterness long pent in our hearts.

John rejoiced too, though not with a bonfire, when Lord Strafford was brought in guilty at his trial and condemned to death, but I felt doubtful; to me the case seemed conducted with too much passion and too little impartiality; moreover, I thought it clear that the King's servants only acted on orders from the King, and this pretence that he was a good and wise King, misled by evil counsellors, seemed to me quite childish. Neither John nor I, nor even Lister, thought that the King would ever sign the warrant for Strafford's execution, but in a manner most pusillanimous and unfitting

to a King, to save himself worse consequences, as he thought, he yielded his friend's life, and Strafford was executed.

Again it happened that the means taken did not secure the end, and he would have done better to keep to the right and face the consequences, for now the King's enemies despised him and his friends feared to stand by him, and the Parliament rose up and passed whatever measures they would. They abolished Starchamber, they denounced Ship-money, they forbade bowings in church and dancing on Sunday, they drew up an immense remonstrance relating all the grievances in the country and forced it on the King.

A great sigh of relief seemed to rise from The Breck at all this; Will had a sermon printed on the recent mercies, and sent us a copy; Lister sang *O give thanks unto the Lord* at the loom instead of *Be merciful unto me*; the children laughed more often and rushed about the house, John ordered a new dyeing vat and brought me from York a length of silk for a new gown.

But we were too soon in our rejoicing; the King, thus baited, was in his turn angered beyond endurance, and began again to stand his ground. He took a journey to Scotland, where by a subtle bribery of granting and withholding his favour he made a party for himself, and came back in a very haughty mood. The country felt this the more bitterly for having begun to have their way, and the differences increased daily between King and Parliament. In the autumn of that year, the common people in London made such an uproar, taking sides, that the King professed himself in danger, and kept himself surrounded by a special guard, courtiers and gentry and officers disbanded from troops abroad, which, since he would not allow the Parliament to have a guard, was very dangerous. It was just after Christmas time, as I remember, that one day, as we sat at table, Sam suddenly let out a snort of laughter, then clapped his hands over his mouth with a deprecating glance at John. His father asked him mildly where his manners were and what was wrong; Sam merely laughed again, his eyes rolling towards the doorway, where Lister stood,

receiving some instructions. Thomas at this looked over his shoulder, and he too began to smile. I was grieved, for though Lister was certainly odd enough in some of his ways and no great favourite of mine, I thought it ill-mannered to laugh at a faithful servant; so I did not turn to look at him, and as soon as I heard his footsteps die away I delivered my sons a little homily on their lack of respect and their unkindness.

"Mother, it's his hair," explained Thomas, smiling gently.

"He's cut it into a text!" cried Sam, bursting out again into laughter.

"What?" said John, laughing in spite of himself. "Here, Lister!" he called. "Lister! Here a moment."

Lister came back into the doorway, when John and the boys laughed heartily at him, and even I could scarcely forbear a smile. He had cut his rusty hair quite short all round his head, so that his large red ears were wholly visible; the work had been done unevenly in front, so that several sparse locks hung separately over his forehead, bearing a ludicrous resemblance, which Sam had noted, to letters and words.

"The proud have had me exceedingly in derision," said Lister with some temper, vexed by our mirth: "Yet have I not shrunk from Thy law."

"Very well, Lister," said John kindly, mastering his laughter. "Thy hair is no man's business but thine own."

He nodded in dismissal, and Lister went away muttering "Long-haired rattleheads," and other such opprobrious terms, which brought another snort of laughter from Sam.

Later we learned what all this meant. We of the Puritan persuasion always wore quieter clothes, and the men had their hair shorter and less curled, than the gentry, for we despised ostentation about our persons as frivolous and tending to distract the mind from higher things; and it seemed some riotous fellow in London, who belonged to the King's guard, being in a clash with the City apprentices, had shouted that he would cut the throats of those Round-headed dogs who bawled against Bishops, Roundheaded

being an allusion to the Puritan cut of hair. Lister had heard of this, and determined to be a true zealot, even to the furthestmost tip of his person. Many others followed this fashion, feeling it a badge and a challenge—I noticed that Will’s hair grew shorter every time I saw him, though I was glad to find he kept it less strange on his forehead than Lister—and after a time the name of *Roundhead* became such common parlance that we forgot we had ever been ignorant of it; but Lister was the first true Roundhead I ever saw.

It was about this time, too, that I first heard that other name, of *Cavalier*. Those courtiers of the King’s guard, because they always wore long curls and swords, began now to be called by those who disliked them *Cavaliers*—a word meaning really, as I understood from David, a horse-man, but few of the people knowing its true sense.

After these names arose, the division in the country was clearly defined and not by any means to be slurred over. A name is a rallying-point, a banner, which ranges men on different grounds; as soon as names are given the differences in men’s opinions, being thus marked, show very clear and cannot escape constant notice, while the agreements between them are obliterated. It was very shortly after this that the black day came when the King actually entered the House of Commons with an armed guard to arrest five members of Parliament—John’s hero, Hampden, was one—whose speeches had displeased him. His Cavaliers behaved very tumultuously on that occasion; they stood by the doors of the House with their swords drawn and pistols cocked, and would not let members come in. Then when they were commanded to admit them, it was reported that one Cavalier cried out disrespectfully:

“Lct ’em come, and be hanged to ’em!”

(These words had a familiar ring in my ears, though I could not quite call to mind whom I had heard use them.) I shall never forget John’s look when he heard of this mad action of the King’s; his cheek grew sallow, he set his jaw; standing very still, his head lowered, he said in a tone which scarcely rose above a whisper:

"It is not to be borne."

And indeed after an infraction of his subjects' liberties so shocking, I do not think there was much hope of a peaceful settlement between King and Parliament. The matter made such an uproar that the King could not bear to stay within sound of it, but very soon went away from the Parliament, and would not return in spite of many petitions and addresses sent to him.

In the spring, to my great concern, he came to York, surrounded by a swarm of gentry and clergy ill-affected to the Parliament. This brought the whole business very close to us, and what with the badness of trade, owing to the unsettled times, and my fears for John, who I dreaded would make some notable defiance of the King's party, I was most uneasy and wretched the whole time of his stay in our county. It seemed there was a great deal of ammunition at Hull, which the King wanted to get hold of, but the Parliament had commanded it to be fetched to London; when the King went to Hull, the Governor of the place would not let him in. He used this as a pretext to say there were designs against him, and he must have a guard for his person, this being an excuse to call out the Train-Bands. When the gentry of Yorkshire hesitated about this, the King summoned the lesser men to meet him on a moor near York; ministers and farmers and freeholders, all had to go. John and Will were amongst those summoned, and I was very anxious for their safety. Just as John was about to set out, we saw Mr. Ferrand riding down the lane on the same errand; John's face clouded, and he drew back, and waited till his uncle should be well out of sight before he started.

I was greatly relieved when John came back, a couple of days later, unharmed, and with a much more cheerful look on his face than I had expected. It was a tremendous sight on the moor, he said, nigh on a hundred thousand men being drawn up there; and he himself had had a very good view of the King. A dark melancholy face he had, said John, across which cloud and sun seemed to chase each other impatiently; he had a very handsome dress and a stiff

seat on his horse and a lofty kingly look, but a jerky and irritable manner, as if he were fretted beyond endurance. A long declaration on his behalf had been read out to those assembled, of which John did not hear a word, save that it concerned the Train-Bands; and as far as he could see, said John, they might all just as well have stayed at home, for nothing was settled. The men he seemed most struck with were the Fairfaxes. Ferdinando, he said, the old Lord's son and Sir Thomas's father, was just like his own father, Mr. Thorpe, small and round and shrewd and fond of vulgar jokes. Sir Thomas was a very different man. He had been chosen to present a petition to His Majesty, imploring him to refrain from warlike measures and return to his Parliament. Will and John had seen a copy of this petition, by courtesy of Lord Fairfax's chaplain, and John was pleased because it told the King plainly that Yorkshire was being ruined by all these troubles, the clothing trade being in great adversity and the whole county in a sense depending on it. The King did not wish to receive the petition, for he doubtless guessed its contents, so he avoided Sir Thomas, who was obliged to follow him up and down the field all day.

“ But he couldn't shake off Black Tom,” said John with a chuckle.

Sir Thomas at last managed to lay the petition on the pommel of the King's saddle, though the King, frowning angrily, jerked at the bridle, so that Sir Thomas was almost ridden down for his pains.

“ Much he cared,” concluded John with approval.

He told this same story several times over, which was not a habit with him, for he was not easily impressed. When I asked him what Sir Thomas was like in looks, he shook his head thoughtfully and seemed unable, or unwilling, to describe him.

Between the hesitations of the gentry, and the humiliation of being refused admission to Hull, and continual difficulties with the Parliament about the Train-Bands, I think the King began to find Yorkshire too hot to hold him, or at any rate too divided to be comfortable; so in the summer he

went away to Nottingham. We had hardly time to sigh with relief at his departure before we heard he had set up his standard there, and begun to issue commissions to gentlemen to raise regiments of foot and horse. At this the Parliament sent no more polite messages, but called out all the Train-Bands, and prepared for war.

"It is the final stroke with the cleaving knife," said John, discussing this with Will before one of our meetings. "England is no longer one, but two; Parliament and King, Roundhead and Cavalier."

"The anger of the Lord hath divided them," quoted Will soberly. "Then were the people divided into two parts."

"What will the Parliament do to the King, Father?" asked Thomas.

"They will fight him," said John grimly.

"Blessed be the Lord my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight," chanted Lister.

"Bang! Bang!" cried Sam, bringing an imaginary musket to his shoulder and taking aim.

So far had I been pushed from my true nature by continual tyranny, which had pressed me ever since my childhood without relaxation, that I saw nothing dreadful in my little son's play of war.

IV
WAR

JOHN FINDS A FRIEND

YES, SO EXASPERATED was I by the fret of continued persecution that I actually felt glad—I am ashamed now to recall it—that the dispute had come at last to the arbitrament of the sword. None of my loved ones were soldiers, I thought, so they were safe; I imagined there would be one great exciting battle, such as I had read of in David's books, at which God would surely grant His servants victory, and then everything would be settled and we should have peace and freedom, and life would be good once more.

How different the event proved from my expectation, I exclaim at, in pity for my young self, even now.

The very first result of the outbreak of war was a great distress of the cloth trade. In midsummer a ship from Hull always took the Yorkshire cloth across the sea in time for the market at Hamburg. But this year the Governor of Hull would not allow the ship to sail; he could not spare the men to work her, he said, being then at the height of his argument with the King. So first the ship lay at the quay, with cloth aboard her, and then there came rumours that the cloth was to be unloaded and the ship used for some purpose of defence. This spelled ruination for the West Riding; for if the merchants could not get their money for the cloth aboard, they could not pay the clothiers, and if the clothiers could not get their money, they could not pay their weavers or buy more wool, and so the cloth-workers could not buy food, and the markets suffered, and thus every person living in Yorkshire was the poorer for the delay of the ship. John had five dozen good pieces aboard in his own name, besides some that had been taken up by merchants. This troubled him sorely enough, but it was the general distress which

angered him; it was like taking a shipful of life-blood out of Yorkshire, he said, and holding it at a distance, while Yorkshire slowly died of the lack. At the very same time that this ship was stayed in Hull, requests came round that we should contribute towards the Coat and Conduct money of the Parliament's Train-Bands. This maddened John.

"They've taken all we could have given," said he, "and keep it rotting at a quay in Hull, doing no good to anyone. Can't they see that? Can't they see?"

He paced the house with his head on his breast; so strong was his feeling that I could almost see a picture of the ship tied up in Hull, floating on the air before his eyes.

John wrote many letters to the governor of Hull, but received nothing much in the way of replies; and at last he began to consider going there himself to see what he could do, if the other clothiers in the district would give him power to act for them.

When he told me this I was first astonished and then angry. I felt that it was madness in him to cross the whole breadth of the county, when, as we now increasingly heard, Royalist gentry were everywhere raising bands of foot and horse to send to the King, and dragoons—a word of terror to me even then, though I had never seen one—were galloping about, on their way to the war, all over Yorkshire. I thought it wrong for a man to leave his wife and children and put himself in danger, just for the sake of a few pieces of cloth, and I could not refrain from making some reproaches on the subject to my husband.

"What will become of us while you go?" I said.

"What will become of us if I don't go?" said John.

"We shall lack a little wealth," said I. "That is better than lacking a father to my children."

A frown of irritation crossed John's face.

"Penninah," he said stubbornly: "That shipful of cloth is the life-blood of the West Riding."

"I know, I know!" I cried, vexed by this repetition. "But I am talking of the life-blood of my children's father."

"I notice you do not say, of your husband," said John in a gruff tone.

"It is the same, John," I said quickly, sorry to see him hurt, and I made to go to him, but he had flung away towards the stairs.

After that I knew it was no use trying to turn him, he was set to go; so without any further word to him I prepared a small stock of linen and other necessities he would need on the journey. He saw what I was busy with, but made no open reference to the matter, and we passed some uncomfortable days, outwardly polite but inwardly much angered. At last one Tuesday night when he came in from Leeds, I could see by his face that the hour of his going was fixed, and sure enough over supper he began to speak of it. He was embarrassed, and looked down, as he spoke, and I did not help him out as was my custom.

"It will be safe for me to go to Hull now, Penninah," he said gruffly. "All the Yorkshire gentry have met near Leeds, and decided on a treaty of neutrality for this county."

"What does that mean?" I asked.

"It means that there will be no fighting in Yorkshire," said John. "That is, if Parliament approve the treaty."

I was amazed, though not in the sense he expected; in my ignorance it had never occurred to me that fighting would take place on Yorkshire soil. Fighting, in our own county! John's journey seemed more dangerous, more unnecessary, and more wrong, even than before. Fighting in Yorkshire!

"The treaty is subject to the approval of Parliament," repeated John, misinterpreting my astounded look.

"Will Parliament approve?" I asked, catching at this straw.

"I doubt it," said John. "But there will be no fighting till we hear. So if I leave soon, there will be time for me to go and come in peace."

I saw he wished me to ask him when he meant to leave, and out of wifely duty I tried to do so, but the words stuck in my throat. Fighting in Yorkshire! And John crossing its whole breadth twice, for a few dozen pieces of cloth! I could not speak, from sheer anger and dismay.

"I leave to-morrow at dawn," said John at length.

Still I did not speak; and although I rose early next morning and saw that John had a good breakfast and wore his warm new cloak, as a wife should, we were not friendly to one another. I had got the children out of bed to say farewell, as was proper, but they were sleepy and seemed not much affected—they were fond of their father but not overmuch, for indeed hitherto poor John had not the faculty of getting himself much loved. John held the children close and kissed them very tenderly, as though his heart was sore and he sought comfort in their sweet flesh; and then I was sorry for him and would have embraced him warmly, but he was too much hurt, and too stiff in nature, to respond swiftly and make an easy reconciliation, and so we parted ill at ease and vexed.

There was little business to do in his absence, trade being so very slack, as we thought at that time. In a way this was a relief, for when Lister had overmuch to do, or some important decision to make, while John was away, he was apt to come and gabble it all out to me in his shrill raw tones. I suffered him patiently, for I knew his faithfulness and skill, but it was a trial for me; for on the one hand Lister would press and press me for an opinion, and go away hurt and grumbling if I gave him none, and on the other if I gave him one he was apt to jeer at it and hold it up to scorn to John when he returned—as indeed he had often every right to do, for though I had always lived where cloth was made, I knew little of its marketing. In the early days when Thomas and Sam were babes, John and I had often laughed together over Lister's expectation that I should understand threads and dyes as well as he did, but now these tales were apt to irritate John's temper and I did my best not to provoke them. Now that things were so quiet about the place, I thought, at least I shall not have to listen to Lister. But I was mistaken; in his enforced leisure he spent long hours leaning against the house door, his freckled face long and mournful, talking about the difficulties of weaving, the iniquities of King Charles and the marvellous

goodness of John. I had not quite understood before the strength of his devotion to my husband, and I schooled myself to listen to him willingly, feeling it a kind of penance for my vexation with John, of which I wished to be ashamed. When letters came from Hull, telling that the business of the cloth ship was proceeding well, for the Governor saw the force of John's argument about the ruin of the Parliament's cause in Yorkshire if the clothing towns were impoverished, I read them aloud to Lister as well as to my sons. Lister was greatly excited, he cracked his great knuckles with glee and quoted half a dozen psalms at once.

I too was glad of the news, for, knowing John's obstinacy well, I knew he would not leave Hull till he had settled the matter one way or the other, and I longed with increasing urgency to have him safe back home. In a very few days after his departure the treaty of neutrality received the fate he had expected; Parliament condemned it, promptly and utterly. Next we heard that Lord Ferdinando Fairfax was appointed General of all the Parliament's forces in our county. This was another shock to me; I had been slowly coming to the notion that there might be fighting in Yorkshire, but now this appointment seemed to make it sure. Armies in Yorkshire! And John with fifty miles of it to cross! And all for a few score yards of cloth!

So, although my anxiety grew, my anger did not diminish, and when at last one afternoon Lister from the loom-chamber suddenly shouted to me that the master was coming up the lane with three other horsemen, though I ran to the door to welcome John as a wife should, in my heart I had not wholly forgiven him. I will welcome him, I will be glad of his return, I told myself mutinously, but I will *not* be grateful for the safety of a shipload of kerseys. I waited for his greeting; will his sons come first, or his cloth, I wondered, half smiling, as two horses drew up at The Breck door—John's strong bay nag looking squat and full of corners compared with the shapely white horse at its side. (For a moment I thought of Snowball—I had not remembered Snowball for nearly ten years.)

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"Wife! Wife!" called John in a loud lively tone, dismounting rapidly. "Here is Sir Thomas Fairfax, come to dine with us. Welcome to The Breck, Sir Thomas," he added, turning to the rider on the white horse with an eager smile.

One of the mounted men behind rode up to take his master's bridle, and I found myself receiving a bow from Sir Thomas Fairfax, against a background of buff leather coats, bristling, as it seemed to me, with swords and muskets.

I was startled by this sudden intrusion of the gentry and the military into our quiet home life, and felt shy and even a little frightened at the prospect of receiving a knight at my table; but as soon as I looked into Sir Thomas's eyes, I knew my fears were petty and ill-founded.

"He is a very noble gentleman," I thought at once; and I have never had any cause to change that view.

The great Fairfax, as he so soon became, was at that time tall and slight, with long thin dangling hands and a long thin quiet sallow face; his high aquiline features were shaded with a kind of melancholy, a grave reserve that was both stern and dreamy. His dark hair, very fine in texture like that of my little Thomas, fell on his shoulders somewhat carelessly arranged, but his moustache and small tufted beard were trim and comely. In gait he was not graceful in the ordinary sense of the word, but he had an unforced dignity, even in the smallest actions, which came from the noble spirit within him. Yes, he was altogether a most noble and most notable gentleman; not exactly handsome, but yet one to call the eye in any company by some stamp of greatness about his countenance. The prints in the pamphlets, of which there were so many later, never did his looks justice; there was an air of such lofty magnanimity, such honourable integrity, such delicate generosity, in the very turn of his mouth and the look of his fine hazel eyes, as was not to be caught by ink and paper.

"I am very g-g-glad to make your acquaintance, Mrs. Thorpe," said Sir Thomas, startling me afresh by his stutter. "I have heard m-m-much of you from your husband."

He threw a glance over his shoulder at John, who stood eagerly by; it was a glance of affectionate understanding and respect, such as I had seen no man give John before, save perhaps David. "Very m-m-much," concluded Sir Thomas, and he smiled very kindly at me.

He ever stammered painfully over certain letters, especially when he was nervous or dejected, as I soon learned. But I soon learned, too, that the defect in him seemed no defect at all, but merely a natural feature in the man which you accepted and grew fond of for his sake, like his thick eyebrows or the way the hair grew up from his forehead.

As I had not expected John to dinner, much less a distinguished visitor, I had nothing to put on the table worthy of Sir Thomas; but I had ever disliked housewifely fuss and pretences, and judged he would dislike them too, so I told him simply I had nothing ready, and begged his indulgence while I prepared the best meal I could for him. He bowed gravely, and said he would regard it as an honour.

"There are the men too, wife," remarked John.

Pleased that John had sufficient faith in my abilities as a housewife to take it all thus quietly, I said: "I will give orders," and went through into the kitchen, where the two mounted soldiers had already found their way. It seemed they were not Sir Thomas's personal attendants, who had been left behind on the road, somewhat to their discomfiture; these were dragoons, and had soldiered with Sir Thomas and his brother in the Low Countries. Without their leather helmets and their strange-looking muskets, which they had already unslung and stacked neatly by the door, they proved to be very decent sober Yorkshircmen, come off the Fairfaxes' estates in Wharfedale; they tucked themselves into corners as if they were well used to keeping out of the way in kitchens, and began to explain their weapons and the lacing of their buff-coats to little Sam, who gazed at them open-mouthed, and to Lister, who as usual poked his head round the door, eager to hear what was going on. I thought it a marvel to have these two

troopers in my kitchen, little knowing how many I should see there before the year was out; as I attended to the preparing of a couple of fowls and one of our own geese (the season being not far after Michaelmas), the garnishing of a home-cured ham and the setting-out of the best pewter table ware, my heart felt lighter than it had for long enough, from mere excitement. I could hear the voices of the two men—John's strong and homely, Sir Thomas's deep and slow—rising and falling as they strolled about the place together, drew near or walked away. Sir Thomas seemed to know little or nothing of the making of cloth, but he was interested enough to ask questions, and he could not have asked them of any man in the West Riding better able to answer than John. Occasionally I caught sight of them through the open doorway, John pointing and talking with unusual eagerness, Sir Thomas nodding his head and stammering some brief remark which showed that he understood.

At dinner all went well. Sir Thomas ate heartily, if in a somewhat abstracted manner, and my two little sons behaved as they should. Not that I ever doubted of Thomas in this matter, for he was always a courteous gracious child, never thrusting himself forward, but Sam was apt to be a little brusque and over-lively. This day, however, to my great pleasure, he stayed silent and still, for he hung open-mouthed on every word Sir Thomas uttered, fixing his childish eyes on him in a round wonderment which was very flattering to any man who understood children's ways. Sir Thomas after his grave dreamy fashion was such a man; he asked the boys' names, and addressed them sometimes, kindly but without condescension, speaking to them seriously as though they were grown men, which ever wins the hearts of children.

I ventured to ask if Sir Thomas Fairfax had children of his own; he said he had been married five years, and had a little girl of four whom he called Moll, and another little girl, born last year, who had recently died. Sam's face fell ludicrously to hear that his hero—for Sir Thomas was

already his hero—had only girls, for Sam despised girls greatly at that age; I have often noticed that those men who are most manly and most susceptible to women's charms when they are grown, are most regardless of them when they are small. But if Sam thought little of Moll, that was not her father's opinion; Sir Thomas's dark eyes brightened and the shade of melancholy slipped from his face like a cloud from the sun, as he talked eagerly to me of his little daughter. When we had finished our meal, and bowed our heads in thanks to God for His mercy, and left the table, Sir Thomas resumed his talk of Moll; she was inclined to be sickly, he said—in my mind's eye I saw her, a dark plain serious little thing like her father, with fine eyes—and he asked my advice on some of her childish ailments. I gave it as well as I could, for indeed the remedies he told me the physician had advised his wife to apply seemed to me too severe and chancy for a child so young.

"But I have no skill in medicine," I added hastily.

Sir Thomas stretched out his hand and laid one finger very gently on Sam's cheek.

"The hue of this b-b-belies you, madam," said he.

The touch of Sam's fresh warm skin seemed to move him, I thought, for he turned away abruptly, walked towards the house door and looked out. It was a very fine autumn day, and at this hour the westering sun lay very clear and still, making long shadows, across our fields. The air was crisp, with a hint of frost in it, the sky a pale clear blue, every blade of grass seemed to stand out distinct and still; from time to time a handful of leaves from our beech trees down by the beck loosed themselves from the branches with a gentle rustle, and floated very softly and lightly to the ground, a golden shower. Bradford in the distance looked as if it had been washed, its grey walls clean and full of light.

"The lot is fallen unto thee in a fair ground, Jack," said Sir Thomas, resting his hand on my husband's shoulder. "Yea, thou hast a goodly heritage."

John flushed with pleasure. "Aye, The Breck is a gradely

spot," he said gruffly. "And the price of a virtuous woman is above rubies."

Sir Thomas gave his gentle half-ironic smile, and looked over his shoulder at me.

"Virtue shows a g-g-greater g-grace,
Smiling from a beauteous face,"

said he.

"It is true enough," agreed John, looking aside and colouring, but not ill pleased.

I could not but smile in reply, but I was not as content as my looks showed me. I had never heard anyone call my husband *Jack* before, and it was a measure of my failure as a wife to him, I felt, that I myself had never thought of doing so. I was struck silent, and stood pondering. John was now pointing out Bradford Church and the inns and so on, and giving the hills their names.

"It is a very untenable place," observed Sir Thomas, shading his eyes with his hand and following John's explanations keenly. "Down in a dale, with heights all round. A couple of cannon well placed could play on the whole town."

"Bang, bang!" cried little Sam at this, rushing out and throwing himself down on the grass. Thomas imitated him, more quietly.

"Cannon in Bradford!" I exclaimed.

"Forgive me, Mrs. Thorpe," said Sir Thomas, turning quickly. "I am a s-s-soldier, and see things ever with a s-s-soldier's eye."

"But will there be fighting in Bradford?" I asked, incredulous.

"Perhaps," said John.

"We will try to keep it aw-w-way," said Sir Thomas gravely.

"As I understand the matter," began John, "Parliament holds Hull and Selby in the east of the county, and these clothing towns in the West; York and Pomfret are for the King."

"Aye," agreed Sir Thomas.

"It will be very difficult for us here," said John, frowning: "If the King's men spread over the middle of the county. We shall be cut off from our markets and our wool, and our roads to London and to Hull; we shall starve and make no cloth, and there will be no money from us for the Parliament's army."

Sir Thomas gave him a keen searching look.

"Go on," he said.

"Well," began John.

Sir Thomas took a step or two, John moved beside him; they began to walk up and down by the front of the house, talking and drawing maps in the air with their hands. I went in and took the children with me (though they were very reluctant to come) so that the two men might have peace for their discussion. After a time the air grew chill, and I sent Sam out with Sir Thomas's cloak, for I thought he looked not very strong, with his sallow face and thin frame; he wrapped it round him, but continued walking. It was not till long after I had seen the boys in bed that they came in. I rose from my chair by the hearth to meet them.

"Wife," said John in an eager tone: "Perhaps Sir Thomas would stay the night here, if you asked him."

"It would be a great honour for The Brock," said I. "Will you honour us thus, Sir Thomas?"

I spoke very cordially, for I wished it with all my heart, and Sir Thomas gave me his searching look and his gentle smile, and accepted.

I stayed with them only long enough to see them well settled by the hearth, and then went away to prepare his room. It gave me pleasure to light a big fire there and thrust our best copper warming-pan between the sheets, for when a woman sees a sickly and melancholy man of a kindly disposition, she tends to think that his wife scants her care of him, and that she could make a better job of it herself. The voices below still sounded in earnest talk; pausing a moment to listen, I heard Sir Thomas say, clear and deep and without any stammer:

"The welfare of the people is the supreme law of nations, and resistance to tyrants is obedience to God."

I went to see how the dragoons were faring, sent the maids to bed and saw the men housed in Lister's room, he being both fearful and eager of this military company; then I went to bed myself. But I had twice slept, and twice waked to put fresh logs on Sir Thomas's fire, before at last I heard John showing our guest upstairs. Then he came in to our room, treading very softly so as not to disturb me, for indeed the hour was very late.

"I am awake, John," I said.

Then he began to pour out all the history of his meeting with Sir Thomas; how he had had to take devious ways home to avoid the Royalists, and how he had fallen in with Sir Thomas and his brother-in-law, who were about the business of raising the West Riding Train-Bands and their own tenants. The brother-in-law, being Will's patron at Adel, knew John, and introduced him to Sir Thomas as a man of good spirit and plentiful estate, and a strong supporter of the Parliament in Bradford—"Those were his very words," said John. At this Sir Thomas looked him over with a mild gaze which seemed to see everything right through to his backbone, said John, laughing, and asked him some searching questions about Bradford affairs. His answers to these evidently gave satisfaction, for Sir Thomas invited him to ride with their party. He had been of some slight service in writing letters and keeping records of the numbers of men promised, said John, and so it had come about that Black Tom, as his men called him, consented to visit The Breck.

To me it was clear, first that Sir Thomas knew a useful man when he saw him, and second that he and John had become friends the moment they met. They were made for each other's friendship, religious fervour, hatred of injustice, strange fires, sombre depths and all; already, I saw, Sir Thomas understood John better than I did, though I was his wife and had known him nigh on twenty years; while I suspected that in the world of shifting loyalties which high-

up gentry then lived in, the solid integrity of John was to Sir Thomas at once a healing balm and a pillar of support. John was speaking now of Sir Thomas's commission under his father, of Train-Bands and Constables and commissions of array issued by the King. I had never heard him speak so eagerly before, even when the subject was cloth.

"And what of the kerseys, John?" I said as he blew out the candle, not without a slight intent to tease.

"They sailed for Hamburg on Thursday," said John shortly. "Sir Thomas is not very happy with his wife," he went on, lowering his voice. "I think it was not a match with any love in it."

I hoped, with some reproach for myself, that this was not another point in which John and Sir Thomas found themselves in agreement.

"What is wrong with Lady Fairfax?" I whispered.

"Oh—nowt special," said John cheerfully. "I think it is just that she is—shallow. And talks too much," he added. "'Tis an intolerable fault in a woman."

"It is not one of my faults, is it?" I said on an impulse.

As soon as I had spoken I wished to recall my words, for the coy practice I often saw in women, of referring to themselves everything said, whether it was meant so or not, in order to draw attention, was one I despised heartily. But I need not have troubled myself, for John's attention was not drawn; he uttered a rapid perfunctory "No," and went on about Lady Fairfax and Sir Thomas.

"At one time he almost broke off the marriage contract," he said. "I think 'twas respect for his late General, her father, that brought him to the altar. A fatherless girl—he could not leave her."

It was long before we slept; but we were both astir early next morning. I had my guest's entertainment to see to; John roused Lister, and they sat together in the loom-chamber, busy with papers and figures and letters, putting the affairs of the cloth-ship into good order. Sir Thomas slept long; the boys had both gone off to school before he

woke, though they lingered so long in the hope of seeing him that they had to run all the way to Bradford for fear of being late. Sir Thomas seemed vexed with his own lateness when he at last came down, and also quite astonished; he made a deep apology to me, with a colour of embarrassment in his sallow cheek. It was rare, he said, for him to sleep so long; indeed he was not much of a sleeper at any time, it was his practice to read a great deal during the night. He had already noticed the books about our house, and asked now if one of the family were a scholar, and listened attentively while I told him about David.

Then John and he sat down to the long table, and one of the troopers brought in papers from a pack, and they began to work. I left them; but once or twice as I passed by the door I saw Sir Thomas striding slowly up and down, with his hands behind his back, dictating letters in his low uneven stutter to my husband.

While they were busy, there came a great jingling up the lane, and several gentlemen and their attendants rode up and enquired for Sir Thomas Fairfax. Black Tom was not too well pleased to be interrupted thus, I thought; and indeed these visitors seemed to do more talk than work, though they spoke soberly and gravely about the Parliament. I had them served with wine, and their horses fed and watered, for they had come some distance. They left, but more came, and yet more, and again more, so that the knocker seemed never silent. All day long gentlemen stood about in every corner of our house, waiting to see Sir Thomas to receive instructions, or talking of rumoured battles in the south. There was a hum and a bustle about The Breck, such as had not been there since the day of my Thomas's christening; the yard was full of strange horses—of which I have always had a foolish fear—whinnying and stamping and backing their great haunches against the windows. In the kitchen the maids flew about with warm cheeks, laughing and busy.

Sir Thomas was courteous but decided with his visitors, and between each interview he dictated, and my husband

went on writing and figuring. The hours went on; I laid a slight refreshment of powdered meat, cheese and apples at their elbows; they munched and went on working.

At last, all of a sudden as it seemed, everyone save Sir Thomas and his two men had departed; not a horse was left (for which I was truly thankful), not a gentleman to stare at me as I passed by. The sun shone in clear and strong, and everything seemed very still and empty.

"The house looks as if it had been sacked," I said to myself—but that was one of those exaggerations of youth, which uses phrases whose true meaning it has not yet learned by experience.

Then John came out, looking weary but content, and called for Sir Thomas's horse, and bade me go in so that our guest could take leave of me.

Sir Thomas was lounging in a chair by the hearth with his cloak already round him; he looked tired, but scarcely as much so as I expected. He rose as I entered, and bowing over my hand, told me my husband and I had done good service to the cause that day.

"We are very grateful for the opportunity," I said.

"This house and all in it are always at your service," said John gruffly, coming up behind us.

"I h-h-hope I shall visit The Breck m-m-many times," said Sir Thomas, looking about him with an air of affection.

Just as he crossed the threshold I called to him on an impulse: "Will you not bring your little Moll to see us?"

As soon as I had spoken I felt abashed, fearing I had been presumptuous, but he turned and gave me the happiest smile I had yet seen on his reserved and melancholy countenance.

"It is a p-p-p," he began, but could not get the word *promise* out, so said simply: "I will b-b-bring her."

John saw him to his horse, and stood beside him a moment when he had mounted, in silence. Sir Thomas sat silent too, looking in front of him.

"Then," he said at last, as if continuing a previous conversation: "If I need thee, Jack, thou'lt come?"

"I will come," said my husband steadily.

Sir Thomas took his hat off to me and rode away down the lane on his white Fairfax horse, the two troopers thudding solidly after him.

A SOLDIER RETURNS

LOOKING BACK ON this time, the beginning of our Civil War, from the distance of some thirty years, I see now that, in Yorkshire at any rate, men were perplexed as to how to begin to fight. Even Sir Thomas, who was a trained soldier, having fought much in the Low Countries, was confronted with circumstances new to him. Hitherto, going to war, for an Englishman of our time, had meant joining a regiment and being shipped overseas and then marching in proper order up to a great body of enemy also arranged in proper order, who spoke a language different from ours and could never be mistaken for one of us. But here at home it was all quite different; a Royalist recruited one day in a town, a Parliament man the next, and when they had collected their troops, they hardly seemed to know what to do with them. We heard chiefly of small skirmishes in different parts, when a troop on one side beat up the quarters of a troop on the other, made a few prisoners and took, what was much more valuable, some muskets and kegs of powder. For both sides lacked supplies of these, though the Royalists at this time were better armed and better mounted than our men, and more abundantly provided with money, from the help of the great noblemen about the King.

I do not quite remember whether it was at this time or later that my husband was appointed the assessor of Bradford district for the Parliament, but whether he received the official appointment then or not, he was greatly employed in collecting monies and sending them to the Fairfaxes for the upkeep of their men. The Breck grew very busy; my remembrance of those days is of John sitting at the table

bent over his Parliamentary accounts, with two or three men standing about waiting to see him. Some of these were poor men, weavers and the like, who held their few pennies in their hand and had walked many miles to hand in their contribution; others were wealthy clothiers or yeomen farmers, who had ridden in bringing gold. All this John kept a strict account of, and despatched promptly to Black Tom. One day he came home with a couple of muskets, greatly to little Sam's delight; with so much of the county's wealth in the house, he said, it was our duty to have also the means of defending it.

At first things went well with our side in Yorkshire. Lord Fairfax, who had already the south-eastern part of the county, Hull and Selby and along the banks of the Ouse, decided to hold also all the line of the River Wharfe, stretching right across from the hills in the west to the Ouse, and he sent his men to hold the river bridges at Tadcaster and Wetherby. This pleased John greatly, for it linked up our clothing towns in the west with the port of Hull, and kept the Royalists quiet in the middle of the county, so that our cloth carriers could travel with a fair safety towards the sea or London. Since this was exactly what John had represented to Sir Thomas as necessary for the well-being of the clothing towns and the Parliament's cause which depended on them, it was very possible that Sir Thomas had urged John's plan on his father. I mentioned this to John. He coloured and joked gruffly: "Nowt o' t' sort, lass." But I could see he was pleased, and in his heart really thought it was so.

But then the Royalists in the county, seeing that they made no headway, invited the Earl of Newcastle to come down from the northern parts and help them. This Earl was a very great and rich man, high in favour with the King; I remembered that I had heard of him before, as handsome and fond of music and poetry, though I could not then call to mind who it was that told me of him. Certainly I never thought that I should meet this Earl; he was just a name to me. He soon became a name of terror, however, for he

broke easily through the small army sent to check his crossing of the Tees, and swept down on Yorkshire with eight thousand men. These men were all well equipped and mostly used to fighting, so that now the war became a much more stern and well-marshalled affair than it had been before. The next thing we heard was that the Earl had entered York, and the next, that a battle was going on between him and the Fairfaxes, at Tadcaster. Bradford was convulsed by this news, for the Bradford Train-Bands were with Sir Thomas; Sarah Denton, who had become a great deal more homely since her marriage and doted on her husband with a submission amazing to me, came rushing out to The Breck, wailing that she was sure her husband was killed; and I had much ado to quiet her. As for John, he was as white as a sheet, and would not touch food all day; the thought of Sir Thomas in battle for the Parliament, not thirty miles away and at that very hour, was almost too much for his endurance.

Next day the news came that the battle had lasted from eleven in the morning till four in the afternoon, and that the Bradford men had held the end of the bridge all day; but at the end of it all, the Fairfaxes had been obliged to retire towards Selby, for lack of ammunition.

"For lack of ammunition!" said John between his teeth, pacing up and down the room. "For lack of ammunition!"

Then suddenly he controlled himself; he took out his writing materials, throwing them somewhat heavily on the table, and sat down and began to write letters again about the collection of money for the pay and equipment of the Parliament's soldiers.

The result of this battle at Tadcaster was that the Royalists spread right down through the middle of Yorkshire; and the result of this was exactly as John had foretold it. The clothing towns were cut off from their friends in the east of the county, and cloth could not reach Hull; there were Royalists in Leeds, so it was not safe to take cloth to market there; there were Royalists in Wakefield, which barred our way to London. Trade was at a standstill, the pieces stood

piled up high in the corners upstairs; Lister, one day when one of the apprentices had felled his warp, actually came to ask John whether he should begin another piece or no, and John hesitated a long time before replying. At length he said: "Yes," but in a perplexed and reluctant tone, and Lister went away shaking his head and muttering. Then, commodities began to be scarce in Bradford market. This did not affect us at The Breck much, for it was our custom to lay in good stocks for the winter, and we had already done so; besides, we had our own milk and eggs and fowls, and the oats had been good that summer. But the poorer people, who always live from hand to mouth, never having sufficient money to buy in quantity, began very soon to suffer, especially as the winter was proving a severe one. Sarah came out to The Breck again, on the pretence of informing me that her husband was safe, which we knew already, and she would not leave, but began to tell many stories of how she did this and that for me when I was a little girl, and how faithfully she had attended my mother in her last illness and cared for my father and brought up David, and so on. All this was very painful to me, reminding me of old happy days I had long succeeded in forgetting, and I answered her more sharply than I should. Then Sarah burst into tears and shouted out in a high rough tone that they were starving. I was grieved, and gave her eggs and a piece of ham and two bowls of oatmeal from the ark, and told her to come again when that was finished, and I saw Lister run after her as she left and slip a coin into her hand, so I felt she was well provided and thought no more of it. But a day or two later a woman from Little Holroyd village, wife to one of our weavers and a very decent respectable body, came to The Breck. I thought the maid was mistaken in bringing her to me, as probably she had a message for John from her husband, but I was wrong; the poor thing burst into tears and told me the same tale as Sarah. I gave her a bowl of meal and a couple of eggs. John chanced to come in as I was doing so, and hearing my voice looked into the kitchen, to the poor woman's great embarrassment;

she scurried off in a fright. John looked surprised and questioning, so I told him of the errand she had come on. When I asked him whether I had done right to give her meal, he said:

"Aye. It was right. But——"

He broke off, and I saw he was looking very thoughtfully at the meal ark. My heart jumped. We had always filled the ark with meal for our own use, after harvest, and sold only the oats which were left over. Now this ark at The Breck was very large—I had always thought it an ugly clumsy thing, holding far too much for our needs. But John's look made me wonder whether perhaps I should be glad of its size, before this war should be over. I was much troubled by this, thinking of the children.

Next morning early, before it was well light, a few minutes only after the children had set off for school, two clothiers came up the lane at a gallop and turned in to The Breck. They were both Parliament men, wearing their hair short; the elder of the two, a grey-haired man, was named Atkinson, and lived on the east side of Bradford, beyond Church Bank and Barker End; the other, Isaac Baume, a big heavy square man about John's age with a very red face and a homely way of speaking, was that neighbour of ours who had helped John about the ulnage seals. John had seen them from upstairs, and hurried down; they were hardly off their horses before they cried:

"Bad news, Thorpe!"

John stood very solid and asked what was wrong.

"Vicar Corker has run off to the Earl of Newcastle," said Mr. Atkinson.

"Good riddance," said John grimly. "Now we can go to Church with ease again."

"Aye!" said Mr. Baume. "But it seems our Bradford Royalists have been to Newcastle too, d'you see. They've been out secretly and asked him to bring his army in."

"What!" cried John, aghast.

"And they've come back with a letter from Sir William Savile," said Mr. Atkinson, "threatening to plunder and

No

burn the town, unless we pay a tax towards the maintenance of Newcastle's army."

"And Savile himself will soon be on their heels; the Earl's appointed him to reduce the clothing towns," said Baume. "We heard it all last night."

"Who are these Bradford Royalists, these malignants?" shouted John suddenly, very loud and strong. "We had best put them in custody, and garrison the town."

"Giles Ferrand is one of them, John," said Baume, sniffing. "Your uncle."

"What difference does that make?" said John contemptuously. "Do you urge the Constable to apprehend all who've had owt to do with that letter, and we'll gather the well-affected together, and defend the town."

"Aye, that's what we'd like. But how can we do it, John?" said the younger clothier doubtfully. "All our trained soldiers are with Lord Fairfax, and most of them in t'town that are fit for service as volunteers are off with Sir Thomas as well, d'you see."

"We have neighbours," said John stubbornly.

"They won't come without pay."

"And there is little left to pay a garrison with," put in Mr. Atkinson mournfully.

"Well!" said John, setting his jaw. "If Bradford won't pay a garrison, it will have to pay Newcastle's army. Let Bradford choose."

The two men looked at each other.

"We shall have to pay, choose how," repeated John. "Are we to buy cowardice and treachery, or courage and truth?"

"H'm. Well. There is much in what you say, John Thorpe," said Mr. Atkinson. "It's true, too, that we might hold out against a troop of Savile's, for a time. We made a few bulwarks and such, you remember, when Sir Thomas was with us. But if the Earl turns his whole army on Bradford?"

"He won't do that, with the Fairfaxes on his flank," urged John.

"You're very military on a sudden, ever since Black Tom spent a night with you," said Mr. Baume, sniffing sardonically.

"And we'll send a message to Sir Thomas Fairfax for help," concluded John.

The two men seemed to brighten a little at this.

"And who will you get to ride to Selby, with eight or ten thousand of Newcastle's scarlet coats in between?" said Baume.

"I'll go myself," said John impatiently.

There was a pause.

"God's blessing go with you," said old Mr. Atkinson suddenly. "Be off with you, John Thorpe, and we'll see what we can do here i' Bradford."

They mounted their horses—Mr. Baume, who was a heavy clumsy man, threw himself over his saddle face downwards, as I have seen our Sam do, sliding down our stair balustrade; after all these thirty years I can still see the soles of his boots turned upwards, and the odd way he wriggled himself upright in the saddle—and rode away at a good pace down the lane.

John turned to me.

"It is your duty to go, John, and I will not say a word against it," I said quickly before he could speak. "Will you eat before you go?"

"Nay, I must start at once," said John.

I threw another log on the house fire, and fetched John's cloak and boots and set them to warm, for it was a very bitter gloomy day in December, with a hard black frost on the ground and scurries of snow in the air, and, as I told myself, trying to make a joke of it, if John risked the Royalists he need not risk a cold. By the time he had got out some money and put on his better suit and given the needful instructions to Lister, I had spiced a drink for him; I stood beside him while he drank it.

"It seems I am always leaving you, Penninah," said John soberly.

I thought to myself: "Aye, there is a monotony in it!"

But I did not speak my bitterness, for I knew he was right this time to go; I said: "It is your duty. It is the war."

"I shall overtake the children in the lane perhaps," said John. "I'll turn them back—keep them at home till I return."

I nodded, for I could not speak; my heart seemed in my throat.

John kissed me quietly and rode away.

The children soon came running back up the lane, Sam delighted at a day's truancy from school, Thomas more than half sorry, for he loved his book. I made them promise they would not leave our fields, and sent them out to play, then forced myself to perform my household duties. My heart was very heavy, and I moved about in a dejected spiritless fashion. Sometimes the boys ran round the house, shouting and laughing, their cheeks rosy with the cold; then when I looked out again they would be hidden by whirling snow-flakes. The snow began to lie on the ground, and the distant hills looked white against the sombre sky. After a time I heard a dull heavy thud, and was surprised that thunder should come with such big flakes of snow; usually in the winter it is hail that goes with thunder. Then I heard the same deep short thud again.

"It is cannon!" I cried suddenly in terror, and sprang to the door, calling wildly for the children. "Thomas! Sam!"

They came running towards me, their eyes wide, their little faces awestruck. I gathered them to me, and we stood at the house door, looking down towards Bradford. Lister was already at my side. I shaded my eyes with my hand, and peered through the winter murk, but I could make nothing out that looked different from usual. While we stood there, watching and waiting, a few flakes of snow began to drift through the cold heavy air, then they came faster, and soon we were in a snow shower so thick we could no longer see the town. Thomas shivered, and I turned aside to take him in, when suddenly there came a tremendous great report, sharper than the others, and far exceeding

them in noise. The very air seemed to quiver with it, and our ears felt stunned. We stared at each other affrighted, and waited; we thought we heard some faint cries; but then only a long silence. I could not help remembering how Sir Thomas had called Bradford a very untenable town.

For the children's sake, however, I put a good face on my fear, and when Thomas sneezed I drew them in to the fire, and rubbed their hands and comforted them. There was a pinched look on Thomas's gentle face, and even Sam seemed subdued and inclined to ask when his father was coming back, so as there came no more sound from the cannon, I decided we would eat our dinner earlier than usual, to take our minds off what we had heard. While we were at table, one of our apprentices, who had been down in Bradford on an errand that morning, rushed in and told us all the news.

It seemed a troop of Royalists, some in buff-coats, some in scarlet coats and feathered hats, had ridden down towards the town from the direction of Leeds, whereupon some of our men, under the direction of Mr. Baume, had hastily planted themselves in the church steeple, and shot at them. They seemed vexed and surprised at this resistance, which they did not expect; and they drew out two great guns and planted them on a hill near the church, and fired a shot from each—great big iron balls, said the apprentice, marvelling; he had seen one of them lying half buried in the ground, in Kirkgate. But God so ordered it, that the snow-shower fell just then, and the snow falling on the barrels of the guns while they were still heated with firing cooled them too suddenly, and one gun burst. (This was the third, sharpest and loudest, sound we had heard at The Breck.) This bursting of the gun so disheartened the Royalists, said our lad, that they had gone away of their own accord—there was a rumour that one of their officers was hurt; for one of the scarlet coats had been seen to fall to the ground at the bursting of the cannon.

"They've gone away?" I breathed.

"Yes, Mistress—but it's thought they will be back again

before long," said the lad. "They will go and fetch more companies from the Earl of Newcastle, likely."

I sighed in relief, and looking round the table found that the others were all sighing too.

"Will my father be home before the Royalists come again?" asked Sam.

Thomas said nothing, but like Sam he fixed his eyes intently on me, so I, with a confidence I did not feel, said quietly:

"Yes."

After we had left the table, I kept the boys indoors for a time, in fear, but soon they grew restless, so I allowed them out again, on a promise to keep close to the house and come instantly if called. For myself, I took up a stocking I was knitting and sat down by the hearth. The maids were in the kitchen with the door closed, Lister was upstairs, the house seemed very quiet; outside the sky loomed low and dark and grey, or was hidden in a snow whirl.

Then somehow my spirit failed me and I began to weep. Sarah with her talk the other day had brought old times to my mind; they had been in my mind ever since, and this bleak sullen afternoon seemed to me just like that Lord's Day when Will was carried off to Starchamber and my dear father died. How far things have moved since then, I thought; to what a pitch this quarrel has reached! What would my poor father think if he saw England now? And I consoled myself for his death, thinking what anguish this war between Englishmen would have caused him. But as I sat thus by the fire, alone, my father was very present to me, with his tall body and his kind grey eyes and his clear courteous speech, and I thought of his tender love and care, and my childhood, and how I used to read to him at night; and then I thought of my life in The Breck now, my husband away, a hostile army threatening, myself (as I felt at that moment) worn and old. How easily John had left me! My life nowadays seemed to me suddenly unbearably dreary, an endless round of anxiety and care; with a strong uprush of feeling I rebelled against it, and longed for some

brightness, some joy, some laughter, or at least some ease. At once I took myself to task for these wanton, wicked, worldly thoughts; I sprang up and paced the room with my hands clasped, wrestling with my soul in prayer; I reminded myself of the Lord's great mercies; I went to the door and looked out thankfully at my treasures, my two dear little sons. They ran past me full tilt towards the beck; Sam's pugnacious little nose and Thomas's clear gentle forehead were very dear to me, but still I could not stop the tears from flowing down my cheeks. I closed the door again and took a book of sermons from the window-sill and tried to quiet myself by reading, but the letters seemed big and blurred through the tears in my eyes. The book slipped from my fingers, and I bowed my head on the side of the chair, and sobbed aloud.

There came a long thunderous knocking at the door.

At once I was ashamed of my weakness. I sprang up in a flurry and picked up the book and dried my eyes and smoothed my skirts and went to the door, and flung it open, smiling cheerfully.

A Royalist officer stood there, a tall broad man with a scarlet coat and a sword, holding his horse's bridle in one hand. His feathered hat was stuck somewhat carelessly on his flowing curls, and as I stared at him in horror I guessed why it was so, for his left sleeve was turned back and he wore a bandage soaked in blood on his forearm, from beneath which blood was trickling down his wrist and dropping off the ends of his fingers.

"Will you bandage my arm for me, Mrs. Thorpe?" he said.

"No—no," I stammered, hardly knowing what I said in my fright. "Oh, no. There is a Royalist house across there," I went on feverishly, pointing towards Holroyd Hall: "It is but a step up the lane. They will give you every attention there, sir. If you would go there?"

"Penninah *Clarkson* would not have turned a wounded man from her door," said the Royalist.

I trembled. Then I whispered:

"Francis!"

"Captain Ferrand, at your service," said Francis, laughing.

"Francis!" I whispered again. "Francis!"

"Aren't you going to ask me in, Pen?" said Francis in his light easy tones. "That confounded chirurgeon hasn't tied me up properly—if I go to the Hall like this my mother will faint in every room of the house." As I still stood staring at him, with my hands to my heart, he went on teasingly: "Surely John's not such a crop-eared Roundhead he'll turn his own cousin from the door." He gave me a shrewd look, laughed again and said: "I see John's not here. So we needn't wait for his permission." He threw his bridle over the hitching-post, and came into the house and closed the door.

"No! No!" I said, stepping back from him. "No!"

"Why, Pen," said Francis, losing his smile: "You don't mean your heart has really hardened with the years?"

At this, I shook my head softly. My heart was not hard towards him at all. And after all, I thought, what harm could there be in admitting him to The Breck? He would be gone in half an hour. It was the merest humanity to tie up his arm.

"I will bandage your wound," I told him quietly. "Come this way."

"Your grave and lovely voice, Pen," said Francis. "That at least is the same."

"Am I myself much changed, then?" I asked him, though I chided myself for the vanity of the question.

"You are as beautiful as ever," said Francis, considering me thoughtfully: "But in a different way. You have—children, I suppose?"

I told him: two sons.

Francis nodded. "Aye, so I have been told," he said. His face was sober for a moment, then he laughed again, and said, throwing wide his arms: "And what do you think of me? Have I changed in these last nine years, eh?"

I looked at him, smiling, and said: "Yes, you have changed."

He was no longer a slight wayward lad, but a man, tall and strong, with the marks of nine years' soldiering in his face. His hair had darkened, but was still a strong rich gold, very thick and wavy, as it used to be; his eyes were still the same lively merry grey. But his smooth warm cheek had tanned, and the moustache and beard he wore gave him a very manly and soldierly appearance. He wore his full-skirted scarlet coat and his sword and the pistols at his waist and his thigh-long boots with an air, for Francis would not have been Francis without some swagger; but his clothes and his weapons were not new or foppish, they had seen good service, and he was very plainly long at home with them. I judged he was now a gallant and resourceful officer, a little over-daring perhaps, but fitted to be a captain and in charge of enterprises, having learned by experience all the necessary stratagems and cares of war.

"Yes, you have changed," I repeated, smiling.

By this time we had reached the kitchen. The moment Francis appeared in the doorway the two maids screamed, and, dropping one a towel, the other a dish, fell back against the wall.

"There is no need for fear—this is Mr. Thorpe's cousin, Captain Ferrand from the Hall," I told them, and gave orders for hot water and linen, so that I might bandage the wound.

"I shan't eat you, my dears," said Francis, rolling his eyes at them and laughing heartily; they smiled timidly in reply and set him a chair.

To my inexperienced eyes the wound looked deep, though clean; it seemed a piece of metal from the burst cannon had penetrated the flesh and had to be extracted. Francis made light of it, simply cursing the surgeon who had dressed it ill, and rejoicing that it was not in his sword arm.

"I have had many worse," he said, laughing at my concern, and he rolled up his sleeve further, and showed me the puckered weal of a long deep scar. His arm was still as white as when he was a boy, though it was a man's arm now,

strong and sinewy, and lightly covered on the wrist with golden hair. He had received that old wound, he said, in the leaguer outside some town or other in the Low Countries, whose name I do not remember; and from that he fell into talk of his adventures in those wars, so that the two maids listened open-mouthed. When I had washed the wound once, I bade them empty the bowl and bring fresh water; by now they were so eager to serve Francis that they both ran off to the beck together. Francis looked up at me and said in a low caressing tone:

"Pen, we have done this before, you and I."

I said: "Yes," quietly, but my heart was not quiet, for I remembered very well how I had bathed his hurts that Sunday long ago when he had fought with John, and how when I had done he had turned to me and put his arms round my waist, and how I had cradled his head on my breast and loved him. I remembered, too, many other sweet passages of my youth: Tabby and Thunder, and Francis's first kiss, and the poetry writ behind the wager for a cock-fight. In spite of myself I felt my breath quicken, and the colour rise in my cheeks.

"Thy hands are still the softest in England, Pen," murmured Francis, watching me.

"And in the Low Countries?" I asked him in a false voice, trying to joke.

"*And* in the Low Countries," said Francis, laughing.

He told me how to place and tighten the bandage, and when I was clumsy, for my fingers trembled, offered to do it himself with his teeth. I thought this a joke, but it seemed it was not; many a man had stopped a fatal flow of blood, said Francis, by a strip of his shirt and his own teeth. He laughed and showed his strong white teeth as he spoke.

I looked up from tying the bandage to see that Thomas and Sam had come in, and were standing by the kitchen door holding hands, their little heads, one dark, one sandy, very close together as they gaped at Francis, frightened and wide-eyed.

"Boys, this is your father's cousin, Captain Francis Ferrand," I said. "Make your greetings to him."

As mothers so often do, I increased their lack of ease by smoothing their hair and settling their doublets, wishing them to look their best. And as children so often do, they showed up ill before a stranger; they jerked their heads and mumbled, hardly able to take their eyes long enough from Francis to make a proper bow. Francis, who had got to his feet, watched them shrewdly, then returned their greetings with his usual grace.

"I am glad to meet my young cousins," he said.

I gave them a piece of oatcake in their cold little hands and bade them go out and play again. I ought not to have done this, I ought to have kept my children close beside me; but I saw they feared Francis, and I thought too that though Francis's words to them were kind enough, there was some slight mockery in the way he said them. He had moved away back into the house, and I perforce followed him. He threw himself down in John's chair by the hearth, picked up the book I had left at its side, muttered: "Sermons!" with a jesting grimace, and threw it down again.

"Are you not going to offer me some ale, Mrs. Thorpe?" he teased. "My cousin's hospitality seems a trifle churlish."

"Your mother will be eager to see you, Francis," I told him.

"I know," he said quietly.

He might have gone then, for his face was sober, but one of the maids, blushing, came in with a brimming tankard and offered it to him with a curtsy, while the other stood giggling at the door. No woman could withstand Francis long, I thought, half smiling and half vexed. (I should have applied that rule more strictly, if I had been wise.) When they had gone Francis sat looking very fixedly at me with the tankard in his hand, not offering to drink from it; I stood by the table and bore his gaze in silence for some time, not choosing to sit with him or talk, lest he should be encouraged to stay with me. But at last I could bear his gaze, so ardent and so tender, no longer, it stirred too much

confusion in my breast. I cast about for some harmless thing to say, and observed:

"Do you doubt The Breck ale, Francis?"

"I am waiting for you to pledge me," said Francis.

"You must excuse me—I am not drinking," I said, confused.

*"Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine,
Or leave a kiss within the cup
And I'll not ask for wine,"*

sang Francis softly.

"Francis!" I exclaimed harshly. "Enough of this nonsense." I walked away towards the window and stood looking out at the whirling snow. "You are our enemy now, and should not stay in this house. If John were here I believe he would put you in custody."

"Would he indeed?" cried Francis hotly, following me to the window. "He would if he could, no doubt. But two can play at that game. To speak soberly, Pen," he said, leaning against the window-sill so that he faced me: "What kind of a man is John grown these days?"

"He is a great friend of Sir Thomas Fairfax," I said, exaggerating a little out of loyalty to my husband.

"Well, that tells much," said Francis, hitching his sword-belt round so he could loll at ease. "Tom is a melancholy ass, but a good soldier. He deserved a better fate than to marry his Presbyterian general's daughter. And what kind of a husband is John, eh?"

"The best in the world," I told him staunchly.

"Then why were you weeping when I came in, eh, Pen?" said Francis.

"Because John is away," I said quickly. But the tears rose in my eyes again, and my throat felt choked. It was so sweet, so almost unbearably sweet, to have someone's attention fixed on me after all these years, someone who called me Pen, who noticed when I wept, who told me I was beautiful. I turned my head away so as not to betray

my discomposure, but, as if he read my thoughts, Francis went on in a tender caressing tone:

"You are more beautiful now than when I came in, Pen. You had the cold and dusty look of a woman who has not been made love to for many years. Now you are alive and glowing."

"Come, Francis!" I said, forcing a laugh. "What nonsense!" I looked at him to show by my cheerful air the foolishness of his supposition, but his eyes were so near, and said so many things which I did not wish him to think I read in them, that I looked away again quickly.

There was a silence. Francis hummed a little, softly, then took my left hand, spread it on his own, and closed his right hand over my fingers. At his touch my heart turned over within me; I could neither move nor speak.

"So John is the best husband in the world," said Francis. "And those two are your children."

"Yes," I said, making an effort to rally: "Sam and Thomas. Thomas is the elder."

"Penninah," breathed Francis, leaning forward to put his lips close to my ear: "You and I could have done better than that."

"Do not disparage my children, Francis Ferrand!" I cried. But my voice was too shrill, for in my heart I knew his meaning. Thomas and Sam were my children I had carried in my womb, I loved them as my heart's blood, I would give my life to protect them, but they had not the grace, the dash, the bright glory of life which Francis's every movement revealed so abundantly. I struggled not to think what a child of mine and Francis's would have been, but the sweetness of the thought almost overpowered me. I snatched my hand from his and drew back. "Drink your ale and go," I told him hoarsely.

"Not till you have kissed the cup," said Francis, teasing.

"Nonsense," I said; but I did not speak with decision. I was distracted by perplexity whether to do as he asked, regarding it as a foolish custom merely, or whether to do it would be to yield too much to him.

"Or me," concluded Francis. "Kiss me, Pen." His voice was suddenly no longer light and merry; he rose and came towards me purposefully.

"No, no!" I cried, stepping back from him. "I am John's wife, Francis."

His strong arms were about me, holding me close to him. I struggled to unloose them, I beat my fists against his shoulders. "I am John's wife," I repeated.

"What do I care?" said Francis, kissing me roughly. "Thou art mine, Pen. Thou wert always mine, till John took thee from me."

"John did not take me from you," I gasped. "It was your own——" I could not bring myself to say: your selfishness. "You are on the wrong side, Francis," I wept instead.

"I must be true to the cause I serve," said Francis. "I have been one of His Majesty's own guards. How could I leave him?"

"Thine is not a cause, Francis," I said. "It is a tyranny."

"Thou shouldst have married me, then, and kept me from it," said Francis, his voice suddenly breaking with emotion. "What a young fool I was, what a fool, to let thee go! Thy voice has rung in my head, Pen, all these nine long years. Thy lovely voice. Thy lovely face. Pen, my dear heart, my sweet love. Dost thou still love me?"

I whispered, trembling: "Francis!" He bent back my head and kissed my lips, my eyes, my throat, with savage ardour. My hands found his warm golden head, his strong hard shoulders. He murmured in my ear, caressing me, and urged me. I seemed to die in his arms, there was no strength left in me; it was a sin, a grievous sin; a sin before God and man; but I yielded to him.

I will not pretend, or lie to myself. I have repented my sin in bitter shame, in utter humiliation and abasement of spirit; I have paid for it in burning anguish and in long years of torment, in grievous trouble brought on those I loved. But I will not lie, even in my own memory. I yielded to Francis, and it was the sweetest moment of my life.

BRADFORD GIVES QUARTER

ON SATURDAY JOHN came home.

It was at the dead of night; I was abed, but not asleep. Neither was I fully awake; I lay in a kind of stupor, from which since Francis left me I had been unable to rouse myself. Too many contrary emotions battling in my heart, like great winds arrested by each other's force, produced a tense and fearful immobility. Sometimes one gained in strength over the rest, and then my whole soul swayed sickeningly in its direction. There was a wonder whether I, Penninah Clarkson, my father's daughter, had in truth broken my marriage vows and been unfaithful to my husband. Could it be true? I gazed at my act in horror and could not credit it. There was a dreadful shame that I had done this thing to John while he was serving a high cause in which we both believed; there was a guilt which pierced me like a spear whenever I looked at my innocent children. There was a wild grief that Francis had gone, for he must return, he said, to his company that night, and he had ridden away to where I could not reach him. There was also—God forgive me!—a secret shameful sweetness. I called on myself to repent, to confess my sin before God and admit its shame, but I knew my repentance was not whole and honest, because I could not wish my sin unsinned. My soul wished it, that it might throw off its deathly sickness, but my body rebelled, feeling glad and satisfied. So, the battleground of these conflicting passions, I moved about the house in a daze, or sat by the hearth idle, my hands drooping listlessly in my lap. The nights seemed endless, yet I rose from them unrefreshed.

As I lay there, then, neither asleep nor awake, staring wide-eyed at the darkness, I heard a rattle of little stones

against my windows. At first it meant nothing to me, but when it came again my heart cried: "Francis!" and I sprang up and made a light, and threw on a cloak and hurried down and unbarred the door. It was John who stood there; and so I found myself thrown abruptly into the moment I had been dreading, the moment when I had to face my husband.

But I had not to meet his eyes or take his kiss, as I had feared, for he walked straight past me to the table, and threw down his hat and cloak. I followed, fear at my heart; for he seemed so frowning and sober that for a wretched moment I thought he knew my fault. But his frown was not for me; he was preoccupied with larger matters.

"Get me some food and a change of linen, Penninah," he said in a low urgent tone, turning to me. "I must be down at Bradford again within the hour."

Seeing I stood staring at him, for I was not quite able to turn my mind thus suddenly from my own deep perplexities to his, he added: "Quickly, wife. The Royalists will be at Bradford to-morrow, or at latest Monday. We must arm the neighbourhood against them."

Then I remembered all his errand, and exclaimed, and bestirred myself, kneeling with the tinder-box to light the fire.

"And Sir Thomas?" I asked.

"He'll be here as soon as he can," said John in the same low hurried tone. "We must try to hold them off until he comes. They're in force—Sir William Savile has procured three troops of horse and some ordnance and five companies of dragoons, and I don't know how many foot, from the Earl, to come against us."

"All against Bradford?" I exclaimed. "Such a small untenable town?"

"Aye—if they command the clothing towns the Parliament is lost in Yorkshire," said John, setting his jaw. "The Fairfaxes will be cut off in the east—pushed into the sea. Be quick, Penninah. Some of the men down there seem inclined to leave us; if they go our state will be desperate."

He took the two muskets down from the chimney and

began to look at their priming. I ran to the kitchen and saw to his food, then went upstairs to get his linen. The chink of money drew me to the loom-chamber; John was there bending over his desk, counting some gold pieces. He looked up as my shadow fell across his hand.

"This is our children's living, wife," he said steadily, "that I am taking to pay a garrison; I know it well. But I think it better they should live free than rich."

"God go with it," I answered him. At that moment I wished with all my heart that I was a true and faithful wife to him. But because I am sinful in one thing, I thought to myself, that is no reason for me to be sinful in all; I need not totally forget my religion and the liberties of my country, because I have been once untrue to them.

While we were at table, John eating hastily, I heard a pattering noise behind me, and looking round, saw Thomas and Sam standing in the doorway, smiling and mischievous. As soon as they saw we had perceived them, they ran forward and threw themselves into their father's arms. I felt that they were thus delighted to see their father because in their hearts—for children have a strange piercing understanding of grown folk's minds towards them—they felt deserted by their mother. This saddened me; and then I suddenly saw my danger, and lest the children tell John first of Francis's visit, I said quickly, though ashamed of my haste:

"John, Francis has been here."

"Francis?" exclaimed John, and the same look, half affection and half vexation, crossed his face as used to come there in the old days at any mention of his cousin. "And what is Francis like after nine years?" he said.

"Much the same," I began, striving to keep my tone indifferent, dreading lest my cheeks should burn. The children saved me.

"He had a scarlet coat and a feather in his hat," said Thomas eagerly.

"And a sword and two pistols," said Sam.

"And very long boots," said Thomas. "And a cut on his arm. Mother tied it up."

"I didn't like him," announced Sam downright.

"He spoke well," conceded Thomas doubtfully, with an air of determining to be just however much it crossed his inclination.

"Their throat is an open sepulchre," said Lister, appearing suddenly in the doorway. "They flatter with their tongue."

"Since you're awake, Lister, you might saddle Dolly for me," said John over his shoulder.

"Their inward parts are very wickedness," grumbled Lister, disappearing.

"Well—and what did Francis want at The Breck?" resumed John.

I forced myself to smile at him falsely over the children's heads while I explained about the bursting of the gun and Francis's wound.

"He dared not go into Aunt Sybil's presence with a bleeding arm," I said.

A reluctant grin spread over John's face. "I don't blame him for that," he said. "But he's our enemy now if he's with Savile's troop," he went on, sobering. "Don't let him in again. And you, boys, don't go up towards Holroyd Hall. If you hear any firing, stay within the house. Do you hear what I say?"

"Yes, Father," said Thomas dutifully.

"Can't I go down to Bradford and help to fight?" asked Sam.

"No," said John shortly.

Sam sighed but made no argument; he knew his father always meant what he said.

John rose and brushed away the crumbs, put the muskets under his arm and went out. Lister seemed a long time saddling the other horse, for it was a few minutes before we heard the hoofs going down the lane.

The busying of myself about household matters, and now getting the excited children back to bed, woke me from my numb daze, and when I returned to my own bed I could not sleep or rest, but tossed all night. My mind was

in two parts, and I could not make one part conqueror over the other, however hard I tried, however long I prayed. A minor battle was waging in my heart, too, now, as to whether or no I ought to confess my sin to John; and although I knew very well that it would be wicked cruelty to destroy John's happiness so, my conscience nagged me to confession, and some weakness in me urged that I could not bear that heavy secret long alone. But no, no! I would never confess it, never! So I tossed and turned. When at last it was day and I rose, I must have looked exhausted, for Thomas asked very tenderly if I was ill.

I had forgotten it was Lord's Day till I saw my little sons in their best suits, but as soon as I saw them and remembered it, I knew what I must do. I said to Lister:

"I will go to church—Corker is gone, and the prayers will be read by the godly under-minister."

Lister gave me a surly look from beneath his carrotty locks; his freckled face was very pale this morning.

I repeated: "I will go to Bradford Church," for indeed I had a great desire to do so. Though whether it was because I wished to be near John if he should be in danger, or hoped perhaps to catch some glimpse of Francis, or thought that in church I might discover what God had to say to me about my sin, I do not know; all three perhaps. "I will go to Bradford Church," I said again.

"God is not mocked!" cried Lister raucously.

I looked at him, surprised by his text, which seemed unapt. Then I looked away again in horror, for I thought I saw in his face that he knew what had happened between myself and Francis.

"I will go alone. Do you stay here and keep the children close," I said, my voice as strange as Lister's own.

"Aye, go alone," said Lister, sombre. "I will take no wicked thing in hand; a froward heart shall depart from me."

But certainly he knew, I told myself despairingly; how could I ever have imagined that with a guest in the house Lister would stay quietly up stairs in the loom-chamber?

He had descended during Francis's visit, and spied on me, for sure! He knew. He knew. I drew myself erect and turned my gaze full on him, facing him down; his eyes fell before mine and he moved off in his awkward jerky gait, but he still muttered discontentedly. Eagerness to be out of his company was now added to my reason for wishing to go to church, and, scarcely pausing to say farewell to the children, I threw on my best cloak and hurried away down the lane to Bradford.

It was a bright clear day of strong frost, so that my footsteps rang on the hard ground. Whether because I was late or because of the troubled times, nobody seemed abroad besides myself. At first I was glad of this, for with such a secret as I bore it was a relief to be alone, but after a time the stillness and silence of the lane, usually at this hour of the Sabbath enlivened by the talk and footsteps of cheerful folk on their way to worship, began to weigh on my spirits, and I started at every small sound in tree and field. And presently, as a stone rattled again behind the wall and I imagined again I heard a stealthy tread, it struck me suddenly that my fears might not after all be idle; Bradford was within reach of war and I might be indeed followed by some Royalist spy. I stood and listened; the stiff grass, white with frost, on my left rustled and was abruptly still.

There was a pause; then a sandy topknot, a shrewd homely little face and a pair of wary eyes rose slowly above the stones.

"Why, Sam!" I said, laughing.

Sam scrambled over the wall and ran to my side.

"What are you doing here, child?" I said.

"I'm coming with you," mumbled Sam, looking aside.

I knew it was useless to press him further; he was his father's son, and if he had come for some deep reason very near his heart—to protect me, to seek his father, or in hope of seeing soldiers—he would never reveal it. "Well, come then," I said, stretching out my hand. He took it eagerly, and I let him walk along beside me without further scolding or question.

The church bell was still ringing as we crossed the Turls, but few churchgoers were in sight, and those were mostly men, and looking very sober and downhearted. We managed to enter with the last group in sight, who were coming down from Barker End; they proved to be the family of grey-haired Mr. Atkinson, one of the clothiers who had come before to warn John of the Royalist plans. I told Mr. Atkinson, rather breathless from our haste, of John's return with the message from Sir Thomas, late last night. He looked at me gravely, and said he knew it. "Your husband has been very active through the night, Mrs. Thorpe," he said. Round the church door, to my surprise, stood a band of Bradford men in their working clothes, Isaac Baume among them. I wondered what they were doing there, and then Sam's hand gave a sudden jump in mine, and I saw piled up against a nearby gravestone a heap of muskets, and against another all kinds of fearful-looking weapons with shining blades. I exclaimed at the sight, for I felt faint to think of those sharp knives being used against living men.

"Your husband says we must hold the church; it is the only tenable place in the town," said Mr. Atkinson beside me. "Is Thorpe within?" he went on to Baume.

"No; he's out with the sentinels—he's posted them round the town," said Baume.

"He learned all that from Black Tom Fairfax," I thought, as Sam and I went into church. And at once a musical voice seemed to sound in my ear, saying: "A melancholy ass but a good soldier."

To shake off such wicked thoughts I looked about me; there was but a scanty congregation, and what struck me as strange and ominous, not one of Royalist sympathies amongst them. There were no Ferrands, for example—but I must not think of that name. I busied myself with keeping Sam to good church behaviour, for he was apt to fidget and to peep between his fingers as he prayed, not being of a devout turn like his elder brother. Just as the under-minister entered, John strode in. When he saw Sam and

myself he lifted his eyebrows and came and stood beside us, frowning.

"What are you doing in Bradford, Penninah?" he whispered sternly. "Bringing Sam into danger! There's no knowing how soon the Royalists will be here. I told you not to leave the house."

I had no answer for him. His seeming to value Sam's safety so much before mine hurt me, and then I remembered that I had no right to be hurt by anything John said to me, and I bowed my head in shame and tried to gather my thoughts to repentance of my sin before God. But I could not; they fluttered hither and thither amongst carnal things, from Francis's laughing eyes to the weapons at the door; and when I urged myself to remember where I was, I saw not God's house, but what had happened to me there: Will's arrest and my wedding and now John's angry frown. Always before it had been pleasant to me to worship between my husband and my son, but now it seemed a misery too great to be borne. And then suddenly, while we were on our knees, the church door was thrown violently open, and Baume's voice shouted:

"Thorpe, they're here!"

Without a word John sprang to his feet and hurried down the aisle. I followed him, pulling Sam, who was eager enough to come; but soon we were delayed, caught in the confusion of the congregation, whose members, crying: "Here! So soon! God save us! Here already!" scrambled hurriedly from their knees and made for the door, jostling each other in their haste. Just then the church bell began to ring above our heads, very harsh and loud.

"The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" shouted our under-minister staunchly.

"Amen, Amen!" cried John. "By your leave, friends! I am about the Lord's business."

At this the crowd, being honest and godly folk, drew back decently, and we found ourselves outside the church, at Baume's side. Baume stretched out his hand and pointed; I shaded my eyes and followed his finger; sure enough, away

up on the hill beyond Barker End, the wintry sunshine lighted on a gleam of steel and a flash of scarlet. I shivered, and Sam's hand tightened in mine.

"Aye, that's Savile's lot, right enough," said John grimly. He turned, spread out his arms to call attention, and shouted: "To your posts, friends! The enemy's on us. We'll give him a welcome he isn't looking for."

"That's right!" cried the men.

There was a moment of confusion as those unable or unwilling to fight dispersed down the Bank, while the rest gathered round the weapons and picked out their own. "The best marksmen to the steeple," cried John, raising his voice again, and at once some pushed past us into the church.

"Be off with you, Baume, over Coley way to Halifax," went on John urgently, putting his hand under the clothier's arm. "There are many there well-disposed to us. Fetch in all the men you can find."

"They'll all be at worship," objected Baume.

"Aye; well; that makes it easier," said John impatiently. "Go in to each congregation and acquaint the ministers of our condition here in Bradford; tell them to beg from the pulpit for the assistance of every godly and able man."

"They wouldn't stay with us last night," grumbled Baume again.

"Now the enemy's in sight they'll see things different," John urged him. "We'll send to Bingley too—we'll bring in the whole countryside. We must hold these malignants off till Sir Thomas reaches Bradford. Take my mare—she's at the Pack Horse."

Baume, compressing his lips doubtfully, nevertheless set off at a good pace down the Bank.

"Thorpe! Thorpe!" came a shout from above our heads. John stepped back and looked up; I did the same, and saw men crowding at the steeple windows, their musket barrels protruding in all directions like faggots in a bundle.

"Are we to give fire when we see them, or wait for their warning shot?" cried out one. "Or will you give the word?"

"Fire as soon as they're within your reach," shouted John. "They won't expect resistance, and it may daunt 'em."

With a beating heart, I watched the men raise their pieces and take sights along the barrels—the Royalists were too far to fire at yet, they called.

When I looked down again, Sam was no longer at my side. I supposed he had run back into the church, to see what was going on there, and so I followed him. Some of the men gathered there were looking to the priming of their muskets, some breaking the glass of the windows to give them room to aim, some tying scythes and sickles to long poles. All this was just what a boy like Sam would be eager to watch, I thought, but Sam was nowhere to be found. I felt I dare not go to John with such a tale, and began to search the church again, asking every group if they had seen my little son.

"I reckon I saw him a while ago, running off down Church Bank," said Mr. Atkinson at length, coming kindly up to me with a fowling-piece in his hand. "A sandy-haired little lad, tall for his age, isn't he? Aye, he went off down the Bank. Making for home, I dare say."

Knowing my little Sam, I doubted this, but glad of any news of him I hurried away. At the foot of the Bank I heard my name called; turning, I saw Sarah Denton at her cottage door, dandling her latest baby in her arms, with her little girl and the other children clinging round her skirts.

"Have you seen my Sam?" I cried.

"He's gone off to Little Holroyd," said Sarah. "Our Sarah here saw him running by, and he told her he was bound for home."

I was surprised but greatly relieved, for since the Royalists were coming from the east and The Breck lay south-west of Bradford, Sam's course home took him out of their way.

"Stay a minute, Mrs. Thorpe, love," urged Sarah. "You look quite peaked and out of breath."

"Nay, I'd best go home," said I, mindful of John's orders.

"Eh, what are they up to now?" cried Sarah, shading her eyes and looking over my head.

I turned; and so both heard and saw a volley come from the muskets in the steeple. The noise was a heavy crackle, like a foot on breaking ice; the sight was very strange, for the short red flame seemed to start a foot or more away from the muzzle of the guns. There were shouts of applause from the direction of Kirkgate, and I looked there and saw a crowd of townspeople come out into the street to watch the fight; and there were angry shouts and cries from up at Barker End, and I looked and saw the hillside thick with scarlet and buff coats, some in ranks with pikes held vertically and colours, some lining the walls and the frosted hedges, some lying prone, some dragging a great gun out over the brow.

"That'll be one of the Queen's pocket pistols your father talks of," said Sarah, pointing it out to her little girl.

"It's a piece of ordnance, a cannon," I said. "Oh, look! There is another."

"Aye, they're a pair. The men call them the Queen's pocket pistols, in joke," explained Sarah.

Her air of satisfaction maddened me; it seemed as if she cared not how great the danger was, since her Denton was safe out of the fight. The Royalists were now drawing their guns down into the shelter of two weavers' houses which stood together on the slope; they planted them to point directly at the church, and wedged their wheels with billets of wood, and presently, as I supposed, charged one of them, for I saw a huge heavy black ball being thrust down its maw, and a buff-coat stood by its muzzle with a piece of lighted match in his hand.

"I wish John would go within the church," I said uneasily, for I could see his dark head at the foot of the steeple, a clear aim for any marksman.

But now there came another volley of musketry from the church. The cannoneer with the match stumbled suddenly to one knee, the match flying as if thrown from his hand, and then he rolled over and lay full length, drawing

up his legs as if he had cramp in his stomach, and then two other buff-coats came and lifted him away; and at this a great shout of applause arose from all the people across in Kirkgate. Then a Royalist on horseback with his arm bound up rode quickly out and seemed to instruct the gunners, stooping to them and waving his sound arm, and they moved away the billets of wood from the other gun, and turned its wheels with their hands, and rolled it out so that it pointed directly in a line with Kirkgate. Our men from the steeple gave out another volley, but seemed not to hit anyone, and we could see the Royalists charging this second gun—it was a sight to see how heavy the cannon-balls were to lift. Then the gun was ready and they all stood back, except one man who came forward with the match, and while he stood waiting for the word to fire there was a kind of silence, everyone waiting to see what the gun would do.

And through that silence, clear and loud and merry, came Francis Ferrand's laugh.

God pity any woman who sees her husband and her lover as I did then! In that moment the truth I had been trying to keep at a distance closed on me and burned into my heart with a searing agony: Francis was there with the Royalists to take Bradford—certainly he was there, certainly, certainly! He was the officer with the bandaged arm—and John was there to defend it with his life; they were both in desperate peril, they would kill each other if they could; whichever side triumphed, I should be in the dust; my soul was for John, my heart for Francis. As the Royalist cannoneer bent over the breach I buried my face in my hands in anguish—but then I knew I could not bear to let either of those I loved out of my sight in such a fearful moment, so I let my hands drop and I raised my head and I watched them both with dry and burning eyes. There came a puff of smoke from the cannon, which looked grey against the frosted ground and then there was a great deep roar, a noise like thunder which made the whole air quiver, so that the house shook and my ear-drums pulsated; and then, across Kirkgate, there were screams, and people running and huddling

together, and the corner of one of the houses crumpled at the roof like a piece of cake broken off by a child, and first two or three stones slipped apart and then the whole wall tumbled headlong. Immediately there came a crackle of musketry from the church, and then another deep angry roar from the other cannon, and great chips of stone flew from the base of the steeple, barely a yard, as it looked, from John's head. A shuddering moan escaped from my lips, and Sarah, looking pale, seized my arm and tried to drag me in, but I shook her off; and as I watched, I saw John and the rest go into the church and close the door. The relief was so great that a faintness almost overcame me, my knees trembled, and I leaned against the door jamb, scarcely able to stand.

After these first exchanges in which each side, as it were, learnt the other's strength, both Royalists and Parliamenters settled to their hateful work and made their dispositions. Our men stayed close in the church, giving fire whenever the Royalists exposed themselves; the Royalists soon saw this, and seemingly had no mind to encounter unnecessary peril, for the main body drew off a little up the hill, waiting till the ordnance should finish the business, and of those left with the cannon, some sheltered by the weavers' houses except when actually at work on the guns, and some went indoors and gave fire with muskets through the row of windows in the loom-chambers. We knew their presence there only by an occasional glimpse of a red sleeve or shoulder, and it seemed to me that they were safer in those small openings than our men in the large church windows, and that our men knew it, for they appeared and fired and withdrew all very suddenly, as if aware that they offered an easy mark. Thus the advantage of the height of the steeple was offset by the good shelter of the weavers' houses, and neither side made much progress. And so the siege went on all morning: the cannon scouring Kirkgate and battering the steeple, and our men giving a rattling uneven fire whenever they saw a buff or scarlet coat, and the Royalist muskets replying on the instant ours appeared in the

windows, firing all together very steadily. Between the firing Sarah and I looked at each other to see if we were still alive, and exchanged a word or two with her neighbours, who were also standing at their doors. I know not how I looked, for I know not how I felt; my whole being seemed gathered in my eyes, and when they no longer had occupation, there was nothing left of me. But Sarah's face was keen and set; at each discharge from our men she cried out encouragingly: "Take that, you godless rascals!" and when a cannon thundered without doing harm, she exclaimed with great satisfaction: "God knows His own!" The folk in Kirkgate learned to run for shelter when the cannon was charged and ready to sound, so that few were hurt excepting once when a ball lighted on a tenter in a nearby close and the bars flew amongst the people; but the church could not move, its steeple began to look worn and spoiled, and the men at the windows grew fewer.

As the morning drew on towards noon, the conviction grew on me that the Royalists would win—there were so many of them, so well ordered, and their guns so great; and besides, Francis in any encounter had always seemed so much more able to come off best than John. When I thought of our men—decent, honest, God-fearing, liberty-loving men, who only wanted the right to obey their own consciences—shut up in the church, with only a few muskets and old-fashioned fowling-pieces, and not much powder, and no hope of any relief, Sir Thomas being yet miles away, my heart burned so with pity for them and hatred for the Royalists that I could scarcely contain myself, and a longing grew on me to scold Francis for a clock hour for his callous, selfish, high-handed, tyrannical ways. Bitter phrases formed themselves in my mind; I longed to turn him inside out to his own view, to expose his high-flown Royalist sentiments for the oppressive cruelty, the arrogant injustice, they truly were. But even as I thought thus, in imagination my tongue faltered, and I knew I meant to end my scolding like a woman, in forgiveness and a kiss.

About the time of noon, during a lull in the firing, we

heard a kind of murmur from Kirkgate, and looking in that direction saw the folk there crowding to the open end of the street, whence they could see the Turls. They were pointing and talking.

"What's going on there?" wondered Sarah, craning her neck.

"Perhaps the men from Halifax are coming!" I exclaimed.

We waited eagerly, and soon my expectation seemed to be fulfilled, for a band of men appeared at the foot of Church Bank, the sunshine flashing on some weapons they were carrying. But they were few, and walked along together in an unaccustomed haphazard way, very different from the military motions of the Royalists.

"If that is all a big town like Halifax can do," began Sarah in a tone of great disgust, "God root it out for a nest of black-hearted malignants."

"There's Uncle Lister, Mother," piped up her eldest little girl, pointing.

The child was right; it was our Lister who headed the band, and the rest were all idle Holroyd men. The poor lads, ignorant of how things were going, began to march right up the middle of the Bank towards the church, forming a mark for the Royalists as easy to hit as a haystack, once they should come within musket-shot. We all called to them and beckoned, and the men from the steeple shouted too—I saw John leaning from a steeple window, waving, then cupping his mouth in his hands to shout in an exasperated way: "Lister!" The Holroyd men stood still, bewildered; then all of a sudden the bullets began to sing past their ears, and they understood their danger and ran for shelter. Lister and some others came tumbling down on top of us, unhurt. I saw now that they carried scythes and sickles and such-like homely weapons; Lister held a notable long pike which seemed familiar to me, when I looked more closely I saw that it was the sharp blade of our spit tied to a pole.

Sarah and the neighbours began to make much of these men, additions to the defending force.

"How did you know you were wanted, lads?" called out a woman next door.

"The hand of the Lord was laid on them," replied Sarah austere.

"Nay—it was your little Sam fetched us, Mrs. Thorpe," said one of the men, who in better times had woven for us, laughing. "He told us Mester Thorpe said every God-fearing man in t'district were to go at once to Bradford kirk. He's a grand little lad, is yon—he went all round Little Holroyd and fair shamed us into setting off."

"Where is Sam now?" I asked quickly. "Lister! Where are my children now?"

"I've locked 'em both up in t'kitchen," said Lister. "They're safe enough."

His tone was so rough and unmannerly that all there looked at him in astonishment that he should address me so. He was as white as a sheet beneath his freckles, his teeth chattered and he continually cracked his great knuckles, ill at ease.

"Are you afraid, Uncle Lister?" piped up little Sarah.

"Though an host of men were laid against me, yet shall not my heart be afraid," chanted Lister loudly. "When the Lord calls, the godly man will not be wanting."

God forgive me, I did not believe him; perhaps I even let my smile show my contempt. It was the last time I ever smiled at Lister. The other men joked him cheerfully on his military spirit, as they called it, being honestly aware that they were afraid themselves.

Suddenly a great shouting from the steeple belaboured our ears. While we had been busy with the band from Little Holroyd, the attention of our men in the steeple had been on them too, and the Royalists had boldly taken advantage of this diversion to send a company on foot down the field towards our row of houses. They were almost on us when the men in the steeple saw them; they gave fire at once and shouted, and the church door opened and some of our men ran out, but it was doubtful whether they would be in time, and if the Royalists had our houses, the church would be

quite cut off. The men from Little Holroyd saw they were called to action; they stood up and took hold of their weapons, but then looked about them uncertainly.

"Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered!" screamed Lister suddenly, and—his eyes glaring, foam at the corners of his mouth—he sprang out into the road and charged fiercely up the Bank, holding his pole before him like a pike. "In the name of the Lord will I destroy them!" he chanted, and the others followed, brave enough now they knew what to do. The Royalist captain, like a good officer, was running well ahead of his men with his sword drawn; "Come on then and be hanged to you!" he cried, and Lister, screaming: "Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron!" ran at him full tilt and struck him a sweeping blow with the pole. The captain lost his feet, the sword flew from his hand; as he stretched to retrieve it his hat fell off, so that I saw his golden head as the other men closed round him. There was the sound of blows, wood on leather and steel on steel; I saw him struggle to his feet, but they beat him down again. Then from the ground a clear high voice, half laughing, half in earnest, cried:

"Well, you have me! Quarter!"

And then there came a sudden sharp cry of pain and fear, and the voice, in earnest this time, repeated:

"Quarter, you fools! Quarter!"

"Aye, we'll quarter you!" screamed Lister madly, and he drove the spit through Francis's heart.

A long scream of agony tore the air asunder; I shall never forget that scream as long as I live.

I do not altogether know what happened then. There was a sudden rush of Parliament men up the hill—they were the long-expected men from Halifax, I learned later—and somehow I was amongst them; and the Royalists fell back and these Halifax men swept on into the church; and then I was kneeling there beside Francis, who lay stretched upon the ground, his bright face queerly slack and drooping, his fine coat stained; and Isaac Baume knelt at my side. Francis gave a sudden twist in my arms and looked up at

me, his grey eyes very wide and staring, and seemed about to say my name, but instead let his head fall back as if he were too tired to hold it up, and sighed, and was silent.

After a moment Baume said soberly: "He's gone," and rose from his knees.

There was a hush; then the leader of the Halifax men said sharply to Lister:

"But what were you about, man? He asked for quarter."

"Quarter?" muttered Lister stupidly. He stood staring down at Francis, with a face so tallowy white his freckles showed on it like coarse brown blotches; his hands hung down, and the pole with them, so that the blood dripped from the end of the spit to the floor. "Quarter?" he repeated.

"Aye, quarter! He surrendered—we all heard him—not to give quarter is against all the usages of war," explained the Halifax man impatiently.

"The word does not bear that sense in Holy Writ," said Lister, obstinate. "Every idle word men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. Quarter!"

"They'll make us pay for this, I'll wager," said the Halifax man in a vexed tone.

"They'll storm the church if we don't look about us, Hodgson," said John's voice from behind, sardonic.

"Will you try a sally, then?" asked Hodgson, who seemed a knowledgeable man in military matters.

"Aye! Now, while they're daunted. After their next discharge," said John.

His words were drowned in the roar of the cannon. The hush which followed was sharply broken by shouted commands and a flurry of footsteps, and John opened the church door, and they all poured out after Hodgson.

"Come on, man!" said Baume to Lister, clapping him on the shoulder. "There's no need to grieve over a malignant quarter or no quarter."

Lister shook his head and muttered: "Quarter!" but suffered himself to be led out, stumbling and awkward.

Then all sounds died away, save for the groans of some wounded men who lay propped against the wall, amongst whom I dimly remember seeing Mr. Atkinson; and all the world seemed empty, save for myself and Francis.

I knelt beside Francis and raised him in my arms, I took his head on my breast, but it hung down heavily; I called him by name: Francis, my love, my darling, Francis, my sweet heart, my own dear lad. I begged him to speak to me. It seemed cruel that he would not speak to me, would not call me Pen, would not kiss me or caress me. He seemed hardly to know that I was there beside him. I stroked back the thick golden hair from his forehead—I can see it yet, springing back so strong and curling; I kissed his eyes, his mouth, his cheek, his hands. But they were cold, so cold; I warmed his hands in mine, but they were cold and heavy. To have him so close in my arms, after lacking him so long, and yet he would not speak to me! It was cruel, cruel. Francis, speak to me! Francis!

After a long time I felt a hand resting gently on my shoulder, and heard a voice murmuring quietly in my ear. When I became aware of them, I knew they had been there for a long time. "Mrs. Thorpe, Mrs. Thorpe," said the voice, a kind homely voice; and after a while it broke a little, and whispered: "Mistress Penninah!" Then I looked up and saw a scarlet Royalist coat, and above it an oldish friendly face I used to know; it was Ralph, the Ferrands' servant, and what seemed strange to me then, his eyes were full of tears.

"It's Ralph," I said dully.

"Yes, it's Ralph, Mistress Penninah," said the man in a fond soothing tone. "See, Mistress; it will be best for you to go home now, before Mr. Thorpe and the rest return. They're off pursuing our men now, but I reckon that won't last long, they'll be back on their necks, soon enough. You go home now." I put out a finger and touched his coat. "I'm Master Frank's body servant," said the man, answering my unspoken question; and at my dear love's name his face contracted. "I let myself be captured," he went on in

a high trembling tone, "so as to be with him. But you'd best leave him now if you value your good name, Mistress."

He took off his scarlet coat and made to put it over Francis's face.

Then I knew that Francis was truly dead, and gone from me for ever, and I held Ralph back, and, trembling, for I had never done this office for anyone before, I drew down the lids over my love's blank eyes. My tears fell on him, and I raised my skirt and wiped them from his face. Then Ralph covered him, and put his hand beneath my elbow and urged me to my feet, and gently drew my cloak together to hide my dress where it was stained with Francis's blood. But still I could not bring myself to go, to leave Francis.

There came sudden footsteps and loud cheerful voices, and the Bradford men with Isaac Baume, and the Halifax men with Hodgson, and the Little Holroyd men with John, were all round me in the church, laughing and talking. They breathed heavily, and their faces were thick with sweat; some of them were wounded, with blood on face or arm, but all seemed very proud of themselves and their exertions.

"I've never seen such a skirmish in my life!" exclaimed Hodgson in a tone of high delight. "Fifty men to pursue a thousand! We must have been mad or drunk to hazard it."

"It's true we shot as if we were mad," said John grimly.

"And the enemy as if they were drunk," cried Baume, with a loud foolish laugh.

"Your husband has done notable execution, Mrs. Thorpe," said Hodgson, catching sight of me. "When I saw you surrounded by those three, Thorpe, I own I feared for you. But he discharged his musket on one of them, Mrs. Thorpe, struck down the horse of another with the thick end, and broke the third's sword, beating it back to his throat; and so put all to flight and returned safe to you."

They all laughed again, so that I felt a strong repulsion from them; it seemed to me that they were drunk with

killing. Behind them I caught a glimpse of Lister; to do him justice he looked white and dazed, but his mouth, like the rest, was set in a silly grin, so that I felt sickened.

"If it is safe now, I will go home," I said in a low voice.

John turned and gave me a strange hard look. "Aye, go home, Penninah," he said. "Go home and keep close. And you, Ralph, go with her. You are my prisoner on parole. See you break this news gently at the Hall, Ralph," he went on, with a disparaging motion of his hand towards Francis.

"Was the Captain a friend of yours?" said Hodgson at this, lifting the coat from Francis's face.

"Not a friend," said John harshly, turning away. "A cousin."

"He seemed a bold, gallant officer," said the Halifax man, dropping the coat. "Pity he couldn't have been better persuaded."

John made no reply.

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS
HAVE I CRIED"

"IF I SURVIVE these days, I shall wonder how I endured to live through them," I often thought to myself in the months that followed, and I have, indeed, often wondered whence I drew the strength to endure the sorrows which then heaped themselves upon my head. Perhaps it was from the children's need of me, perhaps it was from a desire to make reparation to John, perhaps it came from God Himself, who in His infinite mercy did not wish to cast away even so notable a sinner, perhaps it was only from that strong love of life which is implanted so firmly in every human breast. I do not know; but I know that although every hour of every day was one of searing anguish to me, yet I ate and slept and saw to the children's wants and administered to my household, and kept a face on it all not too revealing of my inner suffering, and so somehow lived.

About noon on the next day following Francis's death, Ralph came timidly to our door to fetch me to Holroyd Hall.

"You must come, Mrs. Thorpe. There's nobody but you," he whined. "Mr. Ferrand said I was to fetch you. Nobody'd do it better nor you."

"What is it you want of me, Ralph?" I asked. (The very sight of him was torture.)

"To be with Mrs. Ferrand when we bring him home," whispered Ralph.

In half sentences and obscure phrases, for he could not bring himself to speak clearly, I learned his meaning. It seemed that Mr. Ferrand, having fled to Sir Richard Tempest at Bolling Hall to avoid arrest, was with the Royalist

force, and had caused a trumpeter to be sent out to our men in the church to demand his son's body, which this morning had been delivered to him. He had brought Francis nearly home, but now his courage failed him, and he dared not break the news to his wife alone. It was clear to me that Ralph had reported my mourning over Francis yesterday, that Mr. Ferrand thus knew that I still loved his son and felt he had a right to claim my aid. I shuddered at the task, but I would not refuse any office concerned with Francis, nor was I without a desire to look once more on my love. So I threw on a cloak and followed Ralph.

In the lane I found Mr. Ferrand on horseback beside a cart; he sat very still, but his hands trembled and his sanguine face was pale and drawn. He would not meet my eyes, but glancing aside towards the cart said that Francis lay in it, and that he would give me a few minutes at the Hall to tell his wife before he came.

"I'm much obliged to ye, Penninah," he concluded huskily.

So I went on and began that fearful task which so often falls to women. The servants at the Hall were all, I found, forewarned, and admitted me quickly and silently, their looks showing their sad understanding. Mrs. Ferrand must have heard the noise of my entry, however, though it was so slight, for she ran out of the parlour. Her face fell when she saw me.

"I thought it was Francis," she said, pettishly.

It was so long since I had seen her close that I had forgotten her trick of swallowing her r's till I heard it now again; it made her seem very young and innocent. She was still a pretty woman; her cheek had its former smooth milk and roses, though now it sprang from art rather than nature, and her hair, though not as abundant as of old, was elaborately arranged in many curls about the forehead, and still very golden. The poor woman, knowing that Royalists were in the neighbourhood, hoping for another visit from her son, had dressed herself in her best, a light flowered silk of some kind, so that it was piteous to see her.

"What brings *you* here, Penninah Thorpe?" she said crossly.

My mind flew back to the day I had come to fetch her to see her dying brother, and she evidently remembered it too, for a shade of fear crossed her face, and she went on: "You brought bad news on your last visit," with both rebuke and question in her tone.

I took the opportunity thus offered me, and began: "I fear I bring bad news again. There was fighting down by the church yesterday."

"I know—Giles sent word I was to keep away," said Mrs. Ferrand.

"Men on both sides were wounded," I went on hoarsely.

"Well?" said Mrs. Ferrand, frowning.

I paused, moistening my dry lips; and before I could bring out the fatal word, *Francis*, which would tell her everything, there came the sound of rolling wheels and horses' hoofs, and the sad little procession appeared in the gateway.

"What's that?" cried Mrs. Ferrand, her face changing.

"Mrs. Ferrand, Francis is wounded," I said hurriedly, trying to take her hand.

"My boy, my boy! What have they done to thee?" cried Mrs. Ferrand. She broke from me and ran towards the lane, stumbling over her flowery skirts. With a mother's fatal prescience she made straight for the cart, and before her husband could stop her, climbed on the hub of the wheel, drew back the scarlet coat and gazed on the dead face of her son. She gave a strange loud cry, threw up her hands and fell senseless to the ground.

Mr. Ferrand and I carried her into the house, and when we could not revive her by water or air or cordial, sent Ralph hurrying for the physician. But neither could he restore her with his medicaments; it was a stroke of God, he said, against which he was powerless. Even as we watched, her face was suddenly distorted by a spasm, a breath puffed between her lips and she was gone.

Scarcely had he made sure that life was out of her before

the physician left us hurriedly, for he had the dozen or so men wounded yesterday on his hands, Mr. Atkinson among them being like to die of a bullet in the stomach, he said.

When he had gone Mr. Ferrand and I stared at each other in a daze; the event was so swift we could not truly seem to catch up with it in our minds. Not a couple of hours had passed since Ralph had come to fetch me, and Mrs. Ferrand was then quick with life, smoothing her dress with her pretty hands and swallowing her r's. I made to leave Mr. Ferrand alone with her to grieve, but he stretched out his hand to me and said my name so piteously that I stayed with him. After his first burst of grief, when he knelt beside her with his hand over his eyes and sobbed very pitifully, he rose and drew my arm within his and clasped his hand in mine, and we paced up and down the room together; and when the woman came from the village to lay out the two bodies, we passed into the parlour and paced up and down again there. Mr. Ferrand, in a weak high voice unlike his own, babbled many loving histories about the wife and son he had lost so suddenly and tragically—how he had first met Sybil, how he had loved and courted her, how Francis was born, a big lusty baby, and what a gradely, daring, handsome lad he had always been.

"And now those damned Roundheads have taken them both from me," he said, weeping: "My curse on them! My curse!"

To this I made no reply; but to myself I thought it was the King and Laud and Strafford who had killed Mrs. Ferrand and Francis.

"My heart is broken, Penninah," said Mr. Ferrand between every story. "My heart is broken!"

I thought: "And so is mine," but I said no word, only clasping his hand more strongly in my own.

The short winter's day began to fade, dusk crept up to the windows, the panelled walls sank into shadow, yet still we paced and still Mr. Ferrand eased his sore heart by lamentation. When I could no longer see the painted arms

above the mantelshelf—a cruel mockery now to Mr. Ferrand, with no son left to bear them—I felt that I must return to the care of my own household. I took a sad farewell of Mr. Ferrand, and left him in spite of his pleadings.

Not that I was eager to return to The Breck. It was not a comfortable place for me at that time. I did not find it easy that day to look at Sam's shrewd little face and hear his eager story of how he had sent "reinforcements" from Little Holroyd to his father yesterday, for those reinforcements had included Lister, and Lister had killed Francis. Nor did I wish to meet my husband whom I had wronged, while at the thought of Lister such a rage shook me that I feared I should not be able to control my tongue, perhaps even my nails, if I set eyes on him. John was still absent about the defence in Bradford when I reached The Breck, and Lister mercifully did not present himself at all that day, but the shadow of their return hung over me. Moreover, the maids, in hourly expectation of a second Royalist attack and slaughter, shrieked at every movement in the house, and at the mildest rebuke became hysterical.

When I had coaxed the children to bed, and put the maids to work sorting some goose-feathers, I wrapped myself in my cloak and set the house-door open and stood there looking down towards Bradford. It was very cold; the wind soughed and wailed about the house; I felt so desolate and wretched that I longed for any kind of support and comfort, and since for so many years my great stay and strength had been my husband, I longed for John, his staunch steady mind, his strong arm. I thought of confessing all my sin to him and asking his pardon, and had he come to me then perhaps I should have done so, and saved us both much wretchedness. But it was not to be. Even as I stood there gazing, a confused noise was borne up to me on the wind from Bradford, as of men shouting; my heart quickened its beat, for I feared it was a return of the Royalists. But it seemed a strange hour to begin an attack, and the noise had a cheerful sound, not bloodthirsty, so I calmed myself and

tried to think it had another cause; and sure enough not long after there was the sound of a single horse's hoofs hurrying up the lane, and a horseman turned in to The Breck, and when he drew near it was Isaac Baume, and he waved his hand above his head and shouted breathlessly:

"Black Tom!"

"What, Sir Thomas Fairfax!" I exclaimed. "Has he reached Bradford?"

"Aye!" shouted Baume joyfully. "Black Tom on his white horse! He hasn't failed us! He's passed through the Royalist lines with three hundred men! They won't take Bradford now! Your husband bade me tell you," he went on more soberly, "to expect himself and Sir Thomas here for supper."

So I perforce bestirred myself and made the necessary preparations, not knowing whether to be glad or sorry that I should thus lack opportunity at present for any deep talk with John.

It was late before Sir Thomas reached The Breck. He looked tired but eager, and I guessed by the brightness of his eyes and the smile on his lips that he had performed a considerable feat of arms in reaching Bradford. This animation made him more handsome than before, or perhaps I had forgotten a little his noble carriage and dark distinguished face.

"I was in too great haste to bring M-M-Moll with me this time, Mrs. Thorpe," he jested pleasantly.

I smiled in reply but said nothing, for I could not bring my mind to thoughts of any troubles but my own, and it was indifferent to me whether little Moll came to The Breck or no. In truth I was so numbed and dazed with tribulation I could not feel anything as I should. John's eyes did not meet mine, when I told him, as decency obliged, of Mrs. Ferrand's death; he made no chance for private talk with me, he sat up late writing letters for Sir Thomas, and when I woke in the night he was not beside me. I should have wept and trembled at what this might mean, but I could not; I just went dully on about my household duties.

Next morning while we sat at table, Sam as usual forgetting to eat in order to look at Sir Thomas, Ralph appeared, and holding his hat to his breast and his head down in a humble penitent manner, craved of Sir Thomas a safe-conduct for his master to bury his wife and son in Bradford.

"Surely, surely," conceded Sir Thomas impatiently, as if vexed that his humanity should be so much doubted.

While the safe-conduct was being prepared John asked Ralph the day and hour of the burial, and was told that, on account of the likelihood of further fighting, it was to take place that very day, at noon.

"Tell your master that I will go to the burial with him," said John shortly, and turning to Sir Thomas, he explained, in a cold hard tone: "The dead are my aunt and cousin; I must see them decently buried."

"Well, I must be in Bradford myself all day," observed Sir Thomas thoughtfully. "We must get siege works instantly started."

"But you will return to The Breck to sleep?" said John.

Sir Thomas smiled. "I will return, Jack," he said, his voice very friendly.

So again The Breck was filled with buff coats and helmets and horses, and breast plates and muskets and pikes, and soldiers and messengers going and coming. John was never a minute unoccupied, either writing letters or riding about Bradford and learning siege-craft with Sir Thomas. It came Christmas, and Sir Thomas was still with us; and some days the Royalists would approach within a mile or two and there was a skirmish between the forces, and some days Sir Thomas sat at home in The Breck, conferring with the gentlemen who were his captains and colonels. I could not but admire John's carriage during all this business, which after all was strange to him. In privacy, when the company was gone, it was Jack and Tom with the two men, and there was a very close friendship between them; but when others were there John never presumed on this private understanding, he called his friend "Sir," and carried

himself very quietly and discreetly, never pushing himself forward. John had by this time returned to all his customary ways about the house, except that he treated me as if I were not his wife, but some not-much-liked housekeeper. Lister too had returned to the house; I knew this by hearing his voice, which made me shudder, in the loom-chamber, but I did not see him. Whether he refrained deliberately from my presence, or was kept thence by the much business of figuring and writing for Sir Thomas which John heaped on him, I do not know, but I was glad of it.

One of Sir Thomas's officers gave me money to provide his entertainment, but I was so hard put to it to feed the guests who were always coming and going that often the children and I went very short, and in my heart I blamed John for not seeming to notice it. The Royalists, being spread over the middle part of the county, quite prevented any corn or wool coming to the West Riding—though in truth wool would have been of little use, for there was no one to buy cloth and we did not make any. The meal in the ark lessened so rapidly that I grew afraid, and one evening took occasion to show it to John, speaking with eyes averted and in a dry tone of business, such as we nowadays habitually practised to each other. To my surprise John's eye brightened, and bidding me hold the lid of the ark open, he went aside and urgently called Sir Thomas. With that quiet smile which so often visited his finely moulded lips, half melancholy, half gracious, wholly loving, Sir Thomas stepped into the kitchen and looked into our meal ark, so seriously and so long that I could not help smiling. John said nothing, but gazed earnestly into his face.

“Well, I take your meaning, Jack,” said Sir Thomas after a time. “It is a strong reinforcement of your daily argument.” He paused and seemed to consider, frowning heavily; and there was a long silence. Then suddenly Sir Thomas added with decision: “I will write to my father.”

John's face cleared wonderfully, and with no further word to me made haste to take pen and ink, and he put a fair sheet of paper on the table and sat himself down before it,

and then looked expectantly at Sir Thomas, who laid one of his fine slender hands on John's shoulder for a moment, and then began to move soberly about the room, his hands behind his back, dictating.

"For the Right Honourable My Honoured Father, the Lord Fairfax, General of the Forces in the North," he began. "These. May it p-p-please your lordship."

He looked at John to see if he was ready for the next sentence, and John, after a hurried scratching, nodded, and Sir Thomas went on: "These parts grow very imp-p-patient of our delay in beating the enemy out of Leeds and Wakefield, for by them all trade and provisions are stopped, so that the p-p-people in these clothing towns are not able to subsist, and, indeed, so p-p——"

Here his stammer got the better of him; John, with a scrupulous delicacy I would not have guessed of him, forebore to nod, though I could see his pen had kept pace with the slow considering speech, till the word exploded from Sir Thomas's lips.

"—pressing are their wants," got out Sir Thomas at last, "that some have told me—that's you, Jack," he said, breaking off with a smile—"some have told me, if I would not stir with them, they must rise of necessity themselves."

"It is true," muttered John gruffly, as he wrote.

"Being only commanded by you to *defend* these p-parts, I would not raise the country to *assault* the enemy without your lordship's consent," went on Sir Thomas with emphasis: "But if your lordship please to give me p-p-power to join with the readiness of the p-p-people, I doubt not b-but, by God's assistance, to give your lordship a good account of what we do."

"Amen," said John.

"Humbly desiring your blessing, your lordship's most obedient son," concluded Sir Thomas rapidly. "Best take a copy, Jack, and I will write now to Bingley and Mirfield, to summon them to come in."

I slipped away unnoticed. I could not forbear a slight pride in John, that he should be engaged in such high affairs

of state, and offering advice which Sir Thomas Fairfax accepted; and I acquitted him of carelessness about our supplies. I felt too a gladness that some headway should be made against those tyrannical Royalists; yet I grieved that there should be further fighting.

Lord Fairfax was not long in sending his permission, and a sufficient force was soon collected, for the West Riding was in truth in pressing need, as John had said, and ready to dare anything to drive the oppressors away from their doorstep. So men poured into Bradford on Sir Thomas's summons: gentry and yeomen and simple weavers. Moreover, the West Riding loved Sir Thomas, for his loyalty to the clothing towns and for his own person, and they gave him readily much love and loyalty. "The Rider of the White Horse," they called him affectionately at this time in Bradford. I hated to hear it, for this title meant to me Francis on Snowball, the first Sunday I ever met him; and I doubt not my face grew sullen whenever I heard it, and vexed my husband.

On a cold Monday morning, a fortnight after the writing of the letter to Lord Fairfax, our men set out to attack the Royalists in Leeds. It was a bitter day; a chilling wind stung the tips of the men's ears, so that they looked red and swollen; there was a strong white frost on the ground, making it slippery, and whirling snow showers often veiled the country-side. I planned to give the officers who assembled at our house hot spiced sack as a stirrup cup, to warm them. While I was in the kitchen, ladling sack into our best pewter tankard, for Sir Thomas, my hand started so that the scalding fluid flew in all directions, for Lister was standing in full view on the staircase. The sight of his rough rusty hair and his freckles and his big raw-boned hands made me shudder deep down within me. John was confronting him, barring his passage.

"The work of the Lord must not be done negligently," John was saying sternly. "We need every able godly man in the West Riding to clear the country of these malignants. You are able, and on your own profession, well-affected.

Why do you not take a musket and join us, Joseph Lister?"

"I will never lay hands on a man again," croaked Lister, his voice harsh and mournful.

"Well—I will force no man's conscience," said John coldly, and he turned straight on his heel and left him.

Sir Thomas was already on horseback, and John went out at once and mounted. The maids and I ran to them quickly with the sack; I served Sir Thomas, and wished then to serve John, but mere politeness compelled me to offer to our guests. I came to John last, and Sir Thomas was already gathering up his bridle and looking about him to give the signal for departure; John waved the tankard away without looking at me and moved forward. Then, with a great clattering of hoofs and jingling of spurs, and shouting of the word of the day: *Emmanuel*, they all rode off, Sir Thomas leading. Sir Thomas, I remember, wore on his head a kind of red cap with a scarf to it which he wound about his throat; it was the first time I had seen such a cap, he called it by a foreign name, I think *montero*.

When they had gone I was very sad. This attack on Leeds was a dangerous enterprise, for Sir William Savile held the town very strongly with almost two thousand men and much ordnance, and he had fortified it very skilfully with many trenches. (We had heard this privately from Will, who was daily expecting to be pulled out of his pulpit at Adel, the Royalists being so close, but went on stubbornly preaching the true word, all the same.) To attack was much more hazardous than to defend; had I not often heard Sir Thomas say so? The Royalists were mostly soldiers of long standing, led by officers experienced in war, whereas the most of our men were what Sir Thomas called "fresh-water" men, peaceable clothiers and weavers from Bradford and Halifax, quite ignorant of fighting—some of them had seen a pike for the first time only on the previous Saturday. Yes, the enterprise was full of peril and John might never return from it, and if he did not, that we should part thus unfriendly was a poor ending to our married life, in which after all

there had been moments of honest gladness. It had been blessed with issue, moreover, and my little sons were dear to me. So I felt sad, sorrowful, dreary.

To drown these thoughts I set the maids about a great deal of laundry, of which there was certainly plenty to be done after all these visitors; and I helped them to carry the sheets and napkins and lay them out, partly on the frozen ground and partly on the tenters, and had Thomas and Sam to help me, weighting them down or helping me to fold them. Sam skipped about light-heartedly with stones for weighting, for without knowing it he despised this woman's work and wished to evade it, but Thomas helped me very skilfully and soberly, chattering about thirds and quarters and angles as he folded, for he had something of his father's mathematical ability.

While we were busy thus, I saw a stranger coming up the lane, but as he was on foot and soberly clad, and walking slowly and quietly, I did not much regard him, but went on folding. But when I whipped the corners of one sheet together I found the other end was not being handled the same, and looking up I saw Thomas with the sheet quite forgotten, and his mouth open, staring. So I turned and the wind blew my hair back out of my eyes, and I looked at the stranger, and then Thomas and I called his name at the same moment, for it was David.

I ran to him, and we held each other close, and tears gushed from my eyes for joy and relief to have my own dear brother with me in my troubles, but even in that first moment of meeting I observed that he seemed very grave and quiet. Then there came a sudden peal of laughter from the children, and we looked, and saw that the damp sheet which I had dropped had blown against Thomas and wound itself about him, and Sam was hardly able to help him out of it for laughing. Just as we turned, however, Thomas disentangled himself, when the sheet blew off through the air, coiling and uncoiling itself. We all ran after it, David with the rest; like all things blown by the wind, it fell to earth and started into air again, just when least expected;

we were all warm, and rosy with laughter, by the time we had caught it and weighted it down.

"This is not work suited to the dignity of a Bachelor of Divinity," I jested to David, as I took his arm to lead him to the house, for, knowing little of University terms and courses, I made sure he had taken his degree in divinity before coming home.

"I fear I am not likely to become a Bachelor of Divinity, Pen," said David.

"Not likely!" I exclaimed, halting.

"I have left Cambridge. An oath was being imposed on all Bachelors and Doctors of Divinity before they could receive their degree," explained David: "an oath designed to prevent all innovations in Church government and doctrine. I was required to swear that I approved of the present government of the Church by Bishops and such dignitaries and would never strive to alter it. I could not take such an Arminian oath. My father's son, and Will's brother, not to mention David Clarkson himself, could not so forswear himself. To me, as to John Milton, Bishops are blind mouths, false shepherds, who for their bellies' sake creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold. So here I am, turned up at The Breck again, like a bad penny. I am the bad penny and you are the good one, Penninah," he concluded cheerfully, squeezing my arm.

"So your life's plan is broken," I cried harshly.

"So it seems," agreed David in his quiet scholar's tone.

Then indeed the iron entered into my soul. "Whatever else is wrong in my life," I had often comforted myself in the last wearying years: "At least David is fulfilling his true destiny"; and the thought of him turning the leaves of old volumes in lovely Cambridge had been balm to my bruised spirit. Now that too was gone.

I looked at him. He reminded me much of my father, being very tall and slender and walking with a scholar's stoop, but there was a kind of grace and finish about him now that none of us in Bradford ever had—nor indeed he himself, before he went to Cambridge; the only man I had

seen then with something of the same gracious noble air was Sir Thomas Fairfax. Not that David was finely clad; for he wore a very plain dark suit, made as I saw of cloth from The Breck which John had sent him the previous Christmas as a present. His fair hair too was somewhat tumbled. But his features seemed cast in a very fine and delicate mould now, as if everything worldly had been thinned from them, leaving only what served to express a high intellectual purpose. His speech, too, had an austere beauty; his voice being very quiet and mellow and his words, though copious, never redundant or affected, but always precisely expressive and very simple. “But he will be wretched, he will be wretched here!” I thought to myself, and in my mind’s eye I saw him hanging about the house, quiet, subdued, useless as he would think, pushed into the background by our lustier Bradford men, cut off from the fount of learning which was the only nourishment he desired, his whole life broken.

“David,” I said in a trembling voice: “I cannot bear it. You are thrice welcome at The Breck, but I cannot bear that your ambition should be thus disappointed.”

“It is the will of God,” said David simply. “How goes it with John?”

Then, to conceal my emotion, as we entered the house I began to tell him of all the military happenings in Bradford and of this morning’s expedition. I sat him by the hearth and brought him some broth to set him on till it should be time for dinner, and the children seeing it clamoured for some too, and leaned up against him drinking, and they supplemented my tale with their childish additions, and so it was Sam who told him about Francis. David looked grave, and said soberly:

“They who draw the sword shall perish by the sword.”

I put the text away in my mind for consideration, for I felt it might have some deep application to Francis.

After a time I left David to make arrangements for his food and sleeping, and while I was upstairs seeing to his bed I heard his voice in the loom-chamber, in talk with

Lister. I felt a strong surprise and revulsion, and then I remembered the great fondness Lister had always shown David, and then I reminded myself, exaggerating in my anger, how neither of them had really loved Francis; and then on a sudden I heard Lister's voice wailing:

"I killed him, Mester David, I killed him!"

My flesh chilled and my scalp prickled, to hear him.

Towards evening we were surprised by a visit from Mr. Hodgson, the Halifax captain, who rode up to our door plastered with mud and bareheaded, but smiling very cheerfully; he said he was going home to Coley, and John had asked him to call at The Breck on his way and tell the news. Our men had gained a tremendous victory—or it seemed tremendous to us at that time; for in spite of all Sir William Savile's ordnance and dragoons and trenches, and a very insulting reply he had sent to Sir Thomas's summons to deliver the town, calling his message a "frivolous ticket" and the like, the Parliament men had taken Leeds, and put the Royalists to flight and taken nigh on five hundred prisoners. Sir William himself had been obliged to swim the River Aire to escape, said Mr. Hodgson jubilantly, and was near drowned in the doing of it. He had been in the Aire too—they all had, one way or another.

We had just finished dinner but I asked Mr. Hodgson, who seemed a hearty florid sort of man, to sit to table with us, and he did so, and seeing Sam's eyes fixed on him so eagerly, he began to describe the fight to us in more detail, using trenchers and salt-cellars to mark the positions of bridges and sentries and so on, as men love to do. He told us how they had sung Psalm 68 in the rhymed way: *Let God arise And then his foes Will turn themselves to flight*, as they charged into the trenches, and how excellent were the dispositions of Sir Thomas Fairfax, and how one of the Halifax men had a bullet shot into the hilt of his sword, whereby the hilt was drawn out almost as small as wire; and at last he came to his true point, namely that John had received a bullet on one of his buttons, and his doublet had burst open and the bruised bullet had fallen down

beneath his shirt, and he was not hurt at all—and the Royalists were all in flight towards Pontefract and the West Riding would be free of them, concluded Mr. Hodgson triumphantly.

During all this David sat with his face in shadow, one fine hand resting on the table in the candle-light, listening very intently, smiling a little, as I judged by his voice, at Mr. Hodgson's homeliness and eagerness, and sometimes asking some pertinent question which cleared up a doubtful matter. Once I thought I heard a movement in the shadow by the door, and started and looked quickly; and though I could see nothing, by the chill of my flesh I knew it was Lister.

“And are you leaving your general in his hour of triumph?” David was asking quietly.

Mr. Hodgson said: No, he was returning to Coley only for the night, and would then return again to Sir Thomas's army, for he was resolved to stay by it.

“Then may I beg as a favour that you will inform my brother-in-law of my return and its reason?” said David.

Mr. Hodgson, kindly cheerful creature, buckled on his sword-belt and willingly agreed to do this errand.

So it came about that when, a few days later, John returned to The Breck I had occasion to admire him, for he had hardly entered the house when he advanced to David, and strongly grasped his hand, and smiled very kindly, and said:

“Welcome, lad, for your conscience's sake.”

I admired John for this, but yet I noted he did not welcome David for my sake. In my heart I noted all these things, and felt that one day, when I had time and my feelings were no longer numb and frozen, I should grieve very bitterly over them. At present I was too actively engaged in endurance, to grieve.

It was a pleasure to me—and it seemed a great thing because at that time I had so few pleasures—to see how the friendship between David and my little Thomas renewed itself. They seemed always together, David reading aloud

or talking in his quiet clear fashion, Thomas listening very eagerly; or sometimes David would request Thomas to tell him some mythical story of old times that he had learned at school, and then would mildly ask questions during the course of the story, so that Thomas, as I noticed, grew to think before he spoke and arrange his answers very clearly. Then one morning I found David sitting at the table with Sam and Thomas opposite, teaching them as though they were at school. They both showed him a great deal of respect, for though he was mild there was something in his manner which brooked no foolishness, and it was a great relief to me to see them receiving tuition, for the country was so disturbed I hardly dared let them go down to Bradford to school at that time, and besides, Mr. Worrall, the schoolmaster, was fled away to the Royalists. Yet when I thought of David's great attainments, it seemed pitiful that he should be sitting in a clothier's house teaching two little boys their *hic haec hoc*. I said as much to David, and hinted that John and I were proud to have such a scholar with us as our guest at The Breck. (This I said lest with his delicate integrity he should be feeling he ought to earn his keep.) At my stumbling words David smiled, and said in his quiet but certain tones:

"My brother Will taught me when I was young and the times forbade him employment, and so will I teach your children, Penninah; that the lamp of learning shall not flicker out in the wind of tribulation, but be shielded in a quiet place till a better day." He added: "Your Thomas has the makings of a scholar."

This made me glad, and thenceforward as often as I could I sat with my needle and listened to Thomas's lessons, and rejoiced to hear him prove himself of a clear quick mind, and open to all lofty and generous sentiments. Thomas indeed was a comfort to me, in more ways than this, during that sad winter. His gracious sensitive spirit felt my hidden distress, though he did not understand it, and often he came up to me unexpectedly and threw his arms round my neck and kissed me as though he sorrowed for me.

I needed comfort. I loved David for teaching my sons, but all the same it was a grief to me. Lister crept about the house, sometimes truculent, sometimes mournful, sometimes wailing out to David: "I killed him!" which always made me shudder. John was much away—Sir Thomas, now his work here was done, having removed himself to the east parts of Yorkshire to join his father—and not much my friend, and not at all my husband, when he came home. In any case he had no time for me, being always busy with Parliament accounts and papers. Holroyd Hall was closed and empty, with all the livestock sold, Mr. Ferrand having gone away to join the Earl of Newcastle, which I was very sorry for. Yes, I thought I needed all the comfort I could get that winter, and then, as the winter turned towards our chilly northern spring, which David said was so slow and sparse compared with spring in Cambridge, a blow fell on me which made all other strokes seem light by comparison. One day David was upstairs with Lister, soothing him as usual, and Lister's harsh voice croaking texts rose and rose as usual till it reached his customary climax:

"I killed him, Mester David!"

As usual, I gave a strong shudder; and in that moment I knew for certain what I had guessed before and had tried not to believe: I was with child, and the child's father was Francis.

WOOLPACKS HANG ON BRADFORD STEEPLE

BEFORE I HAD gathered my courage to meet this private trouble, we were plunged into a public misfortune.

King Charles's Popish Queen landed on the coast of Yorkshire, at Bridlington, and at once there began to be stirrings of treason in those parts. I could see that John was troubled and uneasy, but as I was not now in his confidence, I did not know whether this came from distress over Sir Thomas, who was ill of the stone, or from some political anxiety. Then suddenly the governor of Hull went over to the Royalists, and all the East Riding by the coast rose to join him. This was a disaster, and some said it would be the end of the Parliament's cause in the north, for Lord Fairfax's men, along the Ouse by Selby, were like to be caught between two fires and totally destroyed, unless he surrendered.

"Surrender!" exclaimed John when he heard this. "Black Tom will not let him surrender."

Doubtless he was right, for Lord Fairfax did not surrender, but decided to retreat towards us in the West, where the people were always faithful to him. All the way from Tadcaster to Leeds, Sir Thomas had to fight a rearguard action to protect his father's army, and a terrible time he had of it. Hundreds of his men were taken prisoner, among them Sarah's husband, Denton, while poor Mr. Hodgson of Coley—whom I always liked because of his severity to Lister over refusing quarter—was so sorely wounded, shot in two places and cut in several, that he barely escaped with his life, and lay ill in Leeds for many weeks before he recovered. However, Lord Fairfax got safe to Leeds, covered

by Sir Thomas, whom the people loved more and more, for however difficult a task he was set, without much ado or fine talk—which our Yorkshire folk do not care for—he always somehow managed to get through with it, just when everyone said it was impossible. “He never knows when he’s beat,” said Isaac Baume to me once, gazing on Sir Thomas from a distance admiringly, and the Parliament was lucky to have that quality in its general’s son, for without it the struggle in Yorkshire would have been lost and done with, long ago.

The Parliament soldiers now therefore lay again all about us, several thousand of them, garrisoned in Leeds and Halifax and Bradford, and Sir Thomas and his officers were in and out of The Breck, as before. A thing that pleased me was that Sir Thomas took a great liking for David. He had a rare collection of manuscripts and coins, he said, which he wished David to see, and the two talked for hours together about poetry and history, both very bright-eyed and fluent with pleasure. Sir Thomas’s stammer, I noticed, was decreasing; his continual commanding of troops and undertaking of important actions was bringing him to his full flowering, and he seemed more personable, and more like a great general, every time I saw him.

With the Royalists spread again over the centre of the county, there was again a scarcity of food, and I had again great difficulty in providing for all my enforced guests, so that when one day John in the gruff tone he used to me nowadays told me that Lady Fairfax and her little daughter were coming to stay with us, I almost laughed in despair at the impossible task he set me. But I said: “Yes, John,” without a murmur, for at least, I thought, I will do my duty in these matters, I will not fail him about his household even if I have failed him in faith and love. I had not told him that I was with child; I could not decide whether, while telling him, to confess all and thus make his misery certain, or leave him doubtful; and as often as I imagined myself taking either course I felt I had not the courage for it, and left the matter quite alone for the time.

So when he warned me of Lady Fairfax's coming I set to work with a will and cleaned the house from top to bottom, and made our largest spare room ready for her occupation, putting all our best furnishings and linen there, and our best pewter candlesticks, and a coverlet I had embroidered myself, the design of which, of daisies and thrushes on branches, I thought my handsomest. And I put a small bed which Sam had hitherto slept in, ready for little Moll; and I asked David to tell us in what respects our dinners and our manners might be amended, at which he smiled and said we should do well enough as we were, provided we offered the best we were capable of.

While I was busy with preparations I did not give much thought to what kind of a woman Lady Fairfax would prove, but when all was ready I began to experience some anxiety. I had known few women intimately in my life, having lost my mother so early and being provided only with brothers; there were Mrs. Thorpe and Eliza to be sure, but I was certain Lady Fairfax would not resemble them, and there was Mrs. Ferrand, but I knew that Sir Thomas was not over-fond of his wife, and I thought he would have felt an indulgent tenderness for a woman like Mrs. Ferrand. Would she perhaps be cold and stiff and very arrogant? My own pride rose up at the thought.

At last the set day came. When the time of her arrival was some hours overpast, Sam ran in to say a coach was coming up the lane. John and I hastily gathered at the door to welcome her, with Sir Thomas beside us.

The steaming horses drew up by the house, and the manservant sprang down and opened the coach-door and let down the step, and John advanced to hand out his guest, looking, poor John, somewhat anxious. Lady Fairfax took his hand and descended, but was barely out of the coach before, with an "O Tom, what roads, I never saw such roads!" she began a rapid fire of breathless complaints about our lane, in which her coach had had some difficulty. Certainly the lane was soft and sticky with the spring weather, but to listen to her you would have thought the

mud as deep as a lake and the slope a precipice. Not that her complaints were ill-natured or directed against us at The Breck; she simply ran on and on, exaggerating a little more in every sentence to make it exceed the last. Sir Thomas tried to check the volley, presenting first myself and then John to her, and uttering soothing phrases such as: "You are safe here now. All's well that ends well," and the like; but Lady Fairfax saying without looking at us: "I am glad of your acquaintance," and smiling rapidly, turned again to her husband and went on with her: But Tom, O Tom, the road, the mud, the hub, O Tom!

This at least gave me time to look at her, which I did very curiously. I saw a plump solid gentlewoman about the same age as myself, of a brown complexion and rather thick about the ankle, wearing a rich dress of brown watered silk, very handsome but not very becoming. She was not a beauty, and had nothing noble in her countenance, but there was an air of breeding in her features—she had a large straight nose, a full mouth, strong brows and heavy eyelids. Her eyes were a bright and changing brown, like one of her bodice buttons, her teeth large and white; her plump chin would be two in a few years' time. Her dun-coloured hair, not very abundant and rather coarse in texture, was drawn back plainly from her high round forehead—which gave her somehow a bald appearance—and then fell each side of her face into her neck, in stiff curls. A necklace of large pearls did justice to her throat, which was full and shapely. Her speech, though rather loud and hoarse, showed breeding too, having that easy assurance which seems natural to persons of high station. All this time she was talking, and the frown was gathering on her husband's forehead; at last he broke in, and said in a tone too stiff to be disregarded:

"Anne, where is Mary?"

You never saw such a change in a woman. She gave her husband a timid and deprecating look, said: "She is not very well to-day, Tom," and at once fell silent.

And at once I pitied her, for her look told all. She doted

on her husband, who could not bring himself to care a rap for her and was constantly irritated by any proof of her inordinate affection, which she as constantly gave him.

Sir Thomas with a dark look strode to the coach and peering within carefully lifted out a bundle in a shawl, and came to me and laid it in my arms.

"This is my Moll," he said.

I drew back the shawl.

"Oh, the poor little thing!" I exclaimed involuntarily.

The child was so slight and thin she scarcely seemed to weigh more than a year-old babe; her arms beneath the shawl were as narrow as drum-sticks, and her poor sallow little face was so pinched and drawn, her brown eyes looked as large as saucers. Her dark hair was rough and lustreless, and the skin down the side of her neck all blotched and scaly; moreover, though I hardly dared to think this, such of her little shift as I could see at her neck was truly somewhat dirty. There was a look of Sir Thomas about her all the same, something sweet and noble, and my heart went out to her. I cuddled her to me and kissed her sad little cheek and said:

"We'll soon have you looking better, lovey."

Then I remembered that her father and mother were beside me, and looked up, startled at my own indiscretion.

I found Sir Thomas and Lady Fairfax with their eyes fixed on me in a kind of yearning look, truly very pathetic.

"She is always ailing," breathed Lady Fairfax, in quite a different tone from the rattle she had used hitherto. "Isn't she, Tom?"

Sir Thomas frowned and was silent.

I took Lady Fairfax up to the chamber I had prepared for her; as soon as she was out of sight of her husband she grew talkative and inconsequent again, but now I was no longer afraid of her chatter. It seemed to me that this daughter of Lord de Vere and wife of Sir Thomas Fairfax was a woman troubled in her marriage even as I was, though for different reasons, and that we might well have charity each to the other. So I discounted her talk, which

was but froth, and by piecing together the objects of which she spoke, rather than what she said of them, I made shift to understand her true meaning. When she said that the chamber was a fine large one, especially since there was no press in it to take up the space, and Tom liked a large room, I knew she meant that she wished for a cupboard for her clothes but to please her husband would gladly manage without one; and when she said she was sure we should do well together, for she heard from Tom that I was very learned and she herself was very fond of learned women, I knew she meant that she despised all learning but wished she was learned for Sir Thomas's sake, and was a little jealous of me for being so but would gladly acquire the knack of it if I would teach her. A great many bundles were now brought in from the coach, and her maid unpacked them; I could not but be interested in her personal gear, her lincens and silks, her gloves and jewels, and she showed me them all, explaining their price and purpose with a good deal of shrewdness. She had a dressing case of which she was especially proud, for it had been given to her by Sir Thomas at the time of their wedding; a very tasteful box it was, about the size of John's writing desk, covered with fine needlework in silk and gimp, in a pattern of white roses amongst their foliage; it had little drawers which pulled in and out, and a mirror, and some cosmetic waters and ointments, and pincushions. I could see that she doted on this almost as much as she did on Sir Thomas, for she constantly pulled it open and busied herself with its contents. She said to me: "I have often heard of your beauty, Mrs. Thorpe," and before I could reply went on, fidgeting with her ointments: "Sir Thomas likes not cosmetics"—from which I judged that she had sought beauty by artificial means for his sake till he bade her desist, and she would have me know she could be beautiful too but for his prohibition.

All this time poor little Moll sat quiet and still as a frightened mouse, bundled on her cot, her thin legs dangling. I made an excuse and went downstairs and fetched up Thomas's christening mug full of our own milk, warm and

rich, not an hour from the cow, and gave it to her with a piece of oatcake thickly spread with our own butter. How the child ate and drank! It did one good to see her. I made up my mind I would give her a decoction of herbs that very night before she slept, to clear her skin of that scaly itching.

And so poor little Moll became a great comfort to me. Often in the next few months I said to myself: I am a miserable sinner, yet is my life not totally wicked, for I have restored Mary Fairfax to life and strength—though, poor child, considering the destiny life has given her, I am not sure whether it was a boon to her to save her life or no. But yes, I am sure; and she, who dotes on her husband as her mother did on hers, though with so much less reason, would be sure too, and not wish it otherwise.

It was a sight to see how that child grew while with us! John, who marked her progress with great pleasure, said to me it was just as it had been with David after our marriage. The air at The Breck was very healthful, and Thomas and Sam played long hours outside with Moll, very gently and carefully—Sam because she was his general's daughter, and Thomas from natural graciousness. I soon cleared her blood of the imperfections which caused the skin roughness, and I fed her on milk and butter and chicken of our own producing. She could surely have had all that I gave her in her own home in Wharfedale, where the air, being farther from the towns, was even sweeter, but I thought I saw that Lady Fairfax was an unskilful though well-meaning mother, her eyes being always bent upon her husband. And then they lived a somewhat roving life, Lady Fairfax disliking to be parted from Sir Thomas. With us, Moll's little face grew plump, and her arms and legs fattened, and her eyes brightened, and soon she laughed and shouted about The Breck, and like our boys was always hungry. She was of a brown complexion, and never gained the clear rosiness of our two lads, but health gave her dark cheek a kind of rich glow which had its own beauty. She seemed so mopish when lesson-hours deprived her of our boys' company, and hung over the table watching them at work so eagerly, that

David began to teach her to read and draw pothooks. She learned fast, for she had a well-found mind, like her father. The joy Sir Thomas felt in her improvement was so great it made me want to weep and laugh together; when he took her on his knee of an evening, and stroked her short brown hair—now, I am glad to say, much glossier than on her arrival—their two faces, so much alike in shape and expression, sent out such beams of happiness that the whole house basked in them. Moll, though a good, warm-hearted, obedient child, was a trifle reserved, not very prodigal of those tokens of affection often given by children; but she loved her father dearly and loved to show it.

One consequence of her betterment in health was that the Fairfaxes continually postponed their departure; they came—Lady Fairfax and Moll, I mean—at first for a week, then stayed two, then four, and then their departure ceased to be mentioned. If I had known the length of their stay before they came, it would have seemed a hateful imposition to me; but coming upon me gradually, I found it rather more than tolerable. Lady Fairfax, though above me in station, and, to speak truly, beneath me in mind, was after all a woman; a woman young like myself, a wife like myself, like myself the mother of children; she had known unhappiness, and suffered at the hands of one she loved. There were therefore many things we had in common. We were discreet, as wives should be; we did not open our hearts to each other on the subject of our marriages; yet without calling John and Tom by name, there were many things we could say, on the subject of husbands in general, which it eased us to say, and many times when an expressive look between us made the difference between a smile and a sore heart over some slight family jarring. I never thought of Lady Fairfax and myself as being friends, at the time, but now I think we were so. I never spoke to her of Francis, nor she to me of the time when Sir Thomas almost withdrew from their marriage contract, though perhaps, as I had heard her secret through my husband, she had heard mine through hers; but in lesser matters we were confidential: she showed

me the secrets of the cosmetics in her case and said that Lord Fairfax was very tiresome to Sir Thomas about money, while I told her my sadness about David.

In one matter I was most deeply and truly grateful to her. She had not been long with us before her woman's eye perceived my condition, and one day she made a slight reference to it in the men's presence. It was a natural reference and not at all ill-bred, for she merely reproached me for lifting a heavy crock of milk; but it was enough. I saw John start and colour. If he had taken notice of it to me, I might have confessed all to him, but he did not—doubtless he waited for me as I for him—and so the matter remained unopened between us. But at least he knew; my mind was eased of the burden of his ignorance.

It was about this time that Sarah, paying one of her many begging visits to The Breck, broke into a loud lament in the kitchen, reproaching Sir Thomas for leaving her Denton a prisoner in the hands of the Royalists.

Apprehensive that her wails might reach Sir Thomas's ears as he sat at meat I closed the door between, then began to hush her down.

"Be reasonable, Sarah. How can Sir Thomas free your husband?" I asked severely.

"He can take Royalist prisoners and exchange them," wailed Sarah. "It isn't only me, Mrs. Thorpe; all the women in Bradford follow him about the town begging him to exchange their men. He can go and take Wakefield and make prisoners there—it's a perfect den of dragons."

"You mean dragoons," I said.

"It's all the same," wailed Sarah mournfully. "Let him go and take a dragon and exchange him for my Denton, instead of sitting easy on his backside here. The work of the Lord must not be done negligently."

"Hush, hush, Sarah!" I cried, though I could not help laughing at the mixture of her text and her homely speech.

If I had been on friendly terms with John I should doubtless have mentioned this matter to him, but as I was not, it seemed too small, and I spoke of it to no one. So I was

surprised when, a day or two before Whitsuntide, Sir Thomas, who had been sitting very silent and brooding at the dinner-table, so that none of us dare speak to him, suddenly turned to me and said with a smile:

"Tell Mrs. Denton from me that I hope she may soon have her dragon."

I was confused; I laughed a little but knew not quite what to say, for the others were watching in silence, not understanding, and it seemed a long tale to tell in such high company. Sir Thomas went on in a quiet offhand way:

"I hope to take Wakefield next M-M-Monday morning."

I could see that this was news to all his officers except John, for all but John began to put eager questions to him. Sir Thomas answered them jestingly, so that they did not altogether understand him; when they pressed him he became impatient, as if he expected them to know the answers beforehand. It was his habit, as we had learned by now, to be taciturn, reserved and melancholy, almost morose, at times; then suddenly he would emerge from the shadow, all life and assurance, full of wit and energy. So it was now; the next few days were a continued bustle, with Sir Thomas sparkling and active and very happy, his stammer quite in abeyance. Lady Fairfax's humour, however, did not match his; she had been subdued while he was melancholy, but now that he was cheerful she grew apprehensive. She confided to me that these dark moods always preluded some great decision in Sir Thomas, some daring action on the field of battle. He was so very cheerful now that she judged the Wakefield expedition must be particularly hazardous.

"And he's so reckless with his person, Penninah," she mourned, shaking her head so that one of her pearl ear-rings fell to the ground: "Utterly reckless. He fights in an ecstasy. Why stir up the Royalists, in any case? Why not let sleeping dogs lie? They were not harming us."

"Sarah would not agree with you," I said, laughing. "She wants her dragon."

Lady Fairfax smiled, but somewhat ruefully.

She spent the days before Whitsunday begging Sir Thomas to take her with him to Wakefield, which he naturally refused. I saw that her importunity became tiresome to him, and ventured delicately to suggest to her that Sir Thomas would be happier on the battlefield if he knew his wife and daughter safe; whereupon she cried out in a high fretting tone:

"If his daughter be safe he cares not for me!"

To this I could say nothing, for I feared it was true and I knew its bitterness.

I judged we women were like to have a dreary Whitsun, with our natural anxiety continually whipped up by Lady Fairfax's laments. However, when the time came she behaved like a woman of breeding and a soldier's daughter. True, she was dull and stiff all day, but so was I; at least she neither wept aloud nor chattered.

Well! Sir Thomas's taking of Wakefield is forgotten now, I suppose, but at the time it was a very brilliant exploit. There were more Royalists in the city by far than our men had expected, so that several times, by what the officers said, they expected Sir Thomas to retreat and abandon the enterprise. But this notion never entered Sir Thomas's head; he was set on taking Wakefield and never thought of desisting unless compelled. So, although on one occasion he was so far cut off from his men that he had to leap his horse over a high wall to escape the enemy surrounding him, he got safe off, and the enemy fled and with the threat of a piece of ordnance the streets were cleared and Wakefield was taken.

How much Lady Fairfax had to say on the subject of this adventure of the horse, well I remember! She was not without the sort of wit that raises a laugh by continual references to a subject already joked on, and the many ways she found of slyly dragging this horse's leap into the conversation at unexpected moments, made even Sir Thomas smile, while his officers laughed heartily. There was a pamphlet published, for instance, commending Sir Thomas's victories at Leeds and Wakefield, which was called, after him: *The Rider of the White Horse*.

"There should be a drawing of the horse, considering a very high wall," said Lady Fairfax in a serious tone at this, and she went on to describe the roll of the horse's eye, and the curve of its nostril, as it stretched its neck trying to see the top of the wall, in a very comical manner. There was some shrewdness in her jesting, too, for though Sir Thomas laughed, I thought it might well make him more sensible of the need to avoid danger.

John, who was, as he said himself, only a fresh-water soldier though utterly willing, was not in the forefront of the fight, and seemed by his own showing not to have been in much danger, though I noticed Sir Thomas never supported him in this statement. Sir Thomas, as he intended, took many prisoners in Wakefield, and afterwards exchanged them, so that all our men taken on the retreat from Selby were returned to us, and Sarah had her Denton. Both Houses of Parliament, and many private persons, congratulated Sir Thomas; amongst these latter was Colonel Cromwell of the Eastern Counties. That was the first time ever I heard the name of Oliver Cromwell—the first, but not the last!

As he had not enough men to spare to garrison Wakefield, Sir Thomas returned to us in Bradford, and Lady Fairfax and I thought we might now have some time of peace—"for the horse to fatten in," as she said slyly.

But it proved otherwise. The Earl of Newcastle, having now escorted the Queen safely out of Yorkshire to join her husband, and being vexed perhaps, as Lady Fairfax said—for she was sometimes shrewd enough in speculation when it concerned her husband's interests—determined to finish the business in Yorkshire, and marched against the Parliament forces with his whole army, some twelve thousand men.

When they heard his intention, Lord Fairfax and Sir Thomas wrote urgently off to Parliament, begging that Colonel Cromwell might be sent out of Lincolnshire to assist them, for his men had already gained a good name for steadiness (though they were not yet at that time called Ironsides) and the Colonel himself had shown much military

skill and resolution. But the Eastern Counties' men were too much pressed themselves for this to be possible, so our Yorkshiremen had to manage with themselves and a small troop from Lancashire. The Earl of Newcastle first turned against the gentry round Wakefield who had helped Sir Thomas in his assault, and then when he had reduced them began to march on Bradford. Whether he turned on Bradford rather than Leeds because Bradford was such an untenable town, or because he wished to rout Sir Thomas rather than Lord Fairfax, knowing the son much more useful to the cause than the father, I do not know; but I know that verse from Joel was applied to him, wherein it is said that the land was like Eden before him, and behind him as a barren wilderness, for he left no grain of provender anywhere he had passed, either for men or horses. Lord Fairfax and all his soldiers came over to us from Leeds to be ready for the enemy, and every well-affected man left in the district, young or old, gathered to Sir Thomas, the General of the Horse, as his title now ran. Mr. Hodgson turned up from his sick-bed, looking pale and thin but cheerful as ever, and those who by age or feebleness could not come in, such as Mr. Atkinson, poor man, who had never risen from his bed since that terrible Sunday of the siege when he was wounded, sent gifts of money to the cause, or offered loans upon the public faith.

But in truth no great supply came in either of men or money, for the West Riding, though staunch to the cause, was so wasted and exhausted and tired out with the weight of the troubles continually falling upon it during the last twelvemonth, that there was no strength left in it. The Fairfaxes having given nobly of their substance, too, had not much left to call on, and consequently there began to be a great want of pay for the soldiers, and what was worse, want of arms and powder and other ammunition.

Lord Fairfax stayed down in Bradford at the Pack Horse Inn and did not come to The Breck, but Sir Thomas was very urgent that I should be presented to him, so John took me. I was reluctant, fearing I should see some very fine

and impressive gentleman who would frighten me by his grand airs, but Lord Fairfax was not like that at all. Indeed I was something disappointed in him, for in Sir Thomas's father and the Parliament's General I expected much nobility, and saw none. Ferdinando was a smallish solid shrewd man, with abundant greying hair of a rather coarse texture, thick turned-up moustaches which he was apt to twist, and a square high-coloured face. He seemed sensible and practical enough, but had none of the lofty notions and wide visions of his son. He spoke kindly to me and in a very homely way, but not as if he knew who I was. Sir Thomas had a melancholy frown as he looked on at this, but John, standing staunchly by, did not change his expression, and I saw he cared nothing for Lord Fairfax but only for Sir Thomas. So I said but a few words about the Parliament's cause to Lord Fairfax, nothing at all about his son or grand-daughter, and then retired discreetly, and I could see Sir Thomas was relieved and John satisfied.

It seemed there were more beside John and myself who thought little of Lord Fairfax compared with his son. Since if the Parliament men stayed down in Bradford dale they would be caught by the Royalists on the hillsides like a rat in a trap, and in any case we had not provision for a long siege, it was decided to march out and meet the enemy on some ground where their horse and cannon would not have such great advantage, and try to beat them in a single battle. As I came out from Lord Fairfax's presence, through a crowd of officers thronging the passages, I heard half a sentence, loud and clear as one does sometimes when silence falls unexpectedly:

"If only the Lord General could be persuaded to absent himself from the battle!"

Sir Thomas beside me started and coloured, and turned towards the voice, frowning, but I noticed John gave him an eager look. When the officers saw that Sir Thomas was among them they hushed and coughed warningly, and the one who had spoken said in a loud tone of pretended assurance, though with a burning face:

"I was just saying, Sir Thomas—if for any cause the Lord General should be obliged to absent himself, you would be in command of the main battle."

"My father will not absent himself," replied Sir Thomas shortly.

By the looks that went round, and the sigh, suppressed and slight but audible, which arose, I could tell that this announcement did not give pleasure.

Our forces were to start out at four o'clock next morning, so as to be well out of Bradford and up on the hills, before they met the enemy. I rose at three, and roused the maids and set the boys to help the guards wake those of Sir Thomas's troop quartered at The Breck—they were sleeping all over the place, even in the dye-house and on the sacks of unsorted wool in the loom-chamber, indeed one could hardly move without treading on a soldier.

It was dark when I rose, and Sir Thomas meant to be well on his way before sunrise, but owing to some misunderstanding or carelessness or treachery, the soldiers did not gather to the rendezvous at the time appointed. The ammunition train, it seems, was late.

There was much galloping up and down our lane with angry messages, but the sun had long risen, and still they had not moved off. It was a lovely morning, I remember well coming to the door and looking out on it; the sky a cloudless blue, the sunshine bright gold, a little mist down in the hollows which gave promise of great heat later, the grass and the leaves all a fresh clear green, the pale oats rustling in a gentle breeze, the cotton grass on the distant moors all in bloom, very white and silky. Then suddenly I cried:

"David! What do you with that gun?"

For there he was, in a buff-coat he had borrowed from somewhere—it was Mr. Atkinson's—which was far too large for him and hung loosely on his thin form, awkwardly shouldering the old fowling-piece which had hung on The Breck chimney-breast ever since I could remember. He smiled but made no answer. I seized him by the unlaced

fronts of his coat and compelled him to look at me, and said:

"David, you are not to fight. David, you are to be a minister of religion; you should not take life."

For I could not bear the notion of his going into battle. John was a grown man and well able to take care of himself, and if he wished to fight for his cause he must do as he wished and take his chance, and I had confidence he would not throw himself away without good reason; but David was a child and a scholar, if there were a noble foolishness to commit on the field of battle he would certainly commit it—little Sam would be safer as a soldier than his uncle.

"David!" I urged him.

"It is a matter of conscience, Penninah," said David in his quiet scholar's tone. "I cannot let others fight my battles."

"David!" I repeated, pleading. "For my sake! David!"

John came by. "Rest, Penninah, rest," he said, laying his hand on my shoulder as he passed.

His voice and his touch were kinder than of late, and with this and David's calm persistence I was much disturbed. I began to lace up David's buff-coat, holding down my head and quietly weeping.

The foot and a troop of Little Holroyd clubmen, of whom David was one, were now marched off, and the order was given for the officers about Sir Thomas to mount. At this moment of farewell Lady Fairfax chose to make a commotion about Sir Thomas's headgear. She ran out from the house holding the red cap in her hand, and screeched:

"Tom! Your montero! You will catch cold if you leave it! You will miss it round your throat!"

And so on and so on, her loud voice sounding so that even the clubmen in the Lane looked round to see what was going on, while the officers bit their lips so as not to smile. Sir Thomas, who was bareheaded, frowned and threw his cloak impatiently under his arm, as he used to do when he was angry, and said shortly that he meant to wear his helmet—which perhaps was what Lady Fairfax intended.

To make a fool of him like that before his men was tiresome, yet I thought he might have shown her a little more tenderness, since all it meant was her love, and sorrow at his going.

When they had all gone I sat down heavily and covered my eyes with my hand. I was nigh on seven months gone with child, and all this toil, and anxiety, and grief, and little food, and now this last trouble over David, had quite overcome me. Lady Fairfax was very kind in attentions; she shooed the maids and the children away from me as if they were poultry, and gave me a little bottle to smell from, very pungent. She urged me to rest, and I remembered John too had commanded this, so I crawled upstairs and lay on my bed. After a time I heard the great guns begin to thunder, and then a sharp rattle of musketry; and then there rose, away to the south-east in the direction of the road to Wakefield, a kind of distant uproar, compound, I suppose, of shouts and blows. At first I shuddered at every discharge, but I was so profoundly weary that—though I suppose no-one now could credit a woman's sleeping through a battle—I did in fact sleep heavily.

When I awoke I could tell by the way the light fell through the windows that it was well past noon. I was ashamed so to have neglected my guests; I tidied my dress and went down quickly. Lady Fairfax was reading aloud from a book of sermons to the three children. Lister was leaning against the door-jamb, but he moved away quickly when I appeared. They all looked very quiet and dejected, and I could see by Lady Fairfax's face that something was troubling her. I went to her, and began to ask what was the matter, but my voice was drowned by a very heavy roar of ordnance. Lady Fairfax clutched my arm and whispered:

"I am sure those guns are nearer!"

"Nearer?" I said stupidly, not understanding the point of this, even if it were so. "Yes, they sound nearer."

"Then don't you see, our men are being driven back on Bradford!" cried Lady Fairfax.

"No, no!" I exclaimed. "I'll never believe Sir Thomas will lose the battle."

"Sir Thomas is not in command," said Lady Fairfax sombrely.

A sharp rattle of musketry, much clearer and therefore nearer than those we had heard before, made us look at each other, and then there came a cannon discharge which seemed almost on top of the house. On a common impulse we both ran for the door, Lady Fairfax throwing down her sermons as she sprang. I flung open the door and we ran out and stood staring; there was nothing to be seen, and we heard no more guns, but a huge loud murmur rose and rose till the whole air seemed swollen with it. The clamour seemed to pass behind us and die, and then start up again over towards the church in Bradford.

"What can that be?" muttered Lady Fairfax, wringing her hands. "O God, I am sure we have lost the battle."

"It is very sultry," I said stupidly, my teeth chattering.

"Penninah, go in," said Lady Fairfax, turning to me. "Go in and rest, or you will have a miscarriage."

I suffered her to lead me in and give me some cordial. To speak truth, I was in better case than she, poor lady, but it was something to do to turn our minds from the fighting. And while we sat there together, the children clustering about us with frightened faces, we heard heavy running steps come flying down the Ferrand fields, and across our beck and up the slope; and the latch lifted and the door was flung back, and David stood before us. He was crimson in the face, sweating and breathless; he threw his fowling-piece down on the table, and gasped out heavily:

"We have lost—we have lost the battle."

"I knew it!" exclaimed Lady Fairfax.

"John shouted at me to come to you," gasped David.

"Is he hurt?" I asked quickly.

David shook his head. "Not sorely," he said. "Sir Thomas and all his folk have got away over towards Halifax."

I rose up and gave him a sup of cordial, and stood beside him as he drank it, and smoothed his hair and wiped the sweat off his face,

"Will Uncle David tell us about the battle?" whispered Sam behind my skirts.

"Not now; hush, lovey," I whispered back.

"I'm so ashamed, Pen, so ashamed!" broke out David, feeling for my hand.

"Why, what hast done, love?" I said, taking his head to my breast.

"Nothing!" said David bitterly. "Nothing! I never fired a shot or struck a blow. We clubmen marched with the rest up the hill to Adwalton Moor and stood in the rear; and it was passed back to us that the Cavaliers were there already, drawn up in battalions——"

"That looks like treachery," said Lady Fairfax.

"But we never saw them," went on David. "We saw nothing—nothing except grass and hedges and the backs of our men ahead and to right and left. Then guns sounded and muskets went off, and those in front of us moved away, and we were shouted at to go forward, and we went forward; and then suddenly there were red-coats on our left, and our men came rushing back, shouting at us to get out of the way, their mouths all round and their faces red, and we *got* out of the way," he concluded with a rueful laugh. "I saw only the results, never the action which produced them."

"And Sir Thomas?" pressed Lady Fairfax.

"While we were scrambling about behind the hedges out of the buff-coats' way," said David, "a troop of horse came along a cross lane, riding swiftly but in good order, with Sir Thomas and John and some officers at the head of them. John saw me and shouted to me to go to The Breck, and the horse rode on the lane—it's a lane which goes off towards Hartshead and Halifax. Then there came a great shouting and a scurry, and when I looked there was a line of men with pikes charging straight at us. So we ran. *How* we ran!" said poor David. "After a little time I saw that if I went much further in that direction, I should find myself in Halifax instead of Bradford, with the redcoats between, so I took over a hedge northwards. I judge the others did much the same, for we scattered and saw each other no

more. We were all Bradford men, and knew the by-ways. And that is all I saw of the battle of Adwalton Moor—a confused muddle,” said poor David. He sighed, and concluded: “It was very unlike a battle in Xenophon.”

“It is perfectly clear to anyone experienced in fighting what occurred,” said Lady Fairfax with some asperity. “You attacked early and had some success, and the right wing advanced too far, and the enemy outflanked it and wheeled it round, and so cut it off from the main battle and put it to rout. God knows what will have happened to poor Lord Fairfax, cut off from Sir Thomas!”

I reminded her that we had heard the murmur of men on the march over towards Bradford Church, as well as behind us. “Lord Fairfax may have returned to Bradford,” I said.

“Aye, he may. Well, if Sir Thomas is safe in Halifax, he will surely send for me,” said Lady Fairfax. “I will go make preparations.” She picked up her skirts and ran upstairs, and we heard her calling her maid and beginning to pack up her things.

David and I exchanged glances.

“Sir Thomas is not the man I think him, if he makes no attempt to reach his father,” I said. “He will surely try to get back to Bradford.”

“Aye—the Cavaliers are not on this side of the town yet; he could come over Clayton Heights and down by Great Holroyd and slip in that way,” said David. “But he may not—there may be some point of military strategy in it of which we are ignorant.”

“I am sure he will try to rejoin his father,” I persisted, and I went into the kitchen to set on water to heat, so that men’s wounds could be washed if necessary, and to prepare what slight stock of provisions was left to us. There was only one of our maids there, and when I asked for the other girl she looked uncomfortable. “Where is she?” I asked sharply, and the girl, stammering, told me she had run away when she heard Master David say we had lost the battle. “Oh, the silly child!” I cried, distressed. “To run off alone, in front of a whole Royalist army!”

The remaining girl coloured and muttered agreement, but as it chanced I saw her slip a bundle under the table, and knew she had meant to run off too and was only prevented by my entrance. I set her to work and kept her bustling and cheerful.

By the time I returned to the large room, Lady Fairfax was sitting by the hearth in cloak and hat, little Moll beside her dressed for a journey, her bundles all about her and her precious dressing-case in her lap.

"He will send for me soon," she said, almost simpering with pleasure.

I was a little disconcerted by this sudden proposed departure and her certainty of it, so I made no comment. David, however, drew me aside.

"Pen, I have been considering—you and the boys had perhaps better prepare to leave The Breck," he began.

"Leave The Breck!" I exclaimed. "Are you mad, David? What are you thinking of?"

"If the Cavaliers mean to besiege Bradford, if they press close about it with their troops, make a leaguer, I believe it is called," said David, pronouncing the unfamiliar word with great precision, "the inhabitants of the neighbouring countryside should seek shelter within the besieged city's defensive works."

"Is that what they do in Xenophon?" I said, teasing him. "Well—I shall not leave The Breck without John's orders."

"I do not propose that you should, Penninah," said David gravely: "But there is no harm done, and perhaps much good, by preparation."

Though I was reluctant to take any step which seemed to bring me nearer leaving The Breck, I perforce agreed with him, and set about putting together some food, and extra linen, for myself and the children. When we were ready we all sat down together, and I set the door open so that we could hear anyone approach, and then I took out my needle-work and sewed, and we played at spelling with the children. David was always very good at games with words, and Thomas took after him; Sam and Lady Fairfax had little

skill but made merry over their blunders; Moll sat on David's knee and we made easy words for her, and I had the maid and Lady Fairfax's maid in from the kitchen, and so we passed the time on nicely. Lister came and stood by the stairway door, as usual, listening; David beckoned him to a seat by us but he shook his head, muttering mournfully.

So engrossed were we in the game that we actually did not hear the mare's approach till her hoofs clattered at the door. Then we all cried out sharply, and David sprang up and went to the porch, and I saw he had the fowling-piece in his hand, and I trembled. But his face broke into friendliness, and he lowered the gun, and in came John. He was dirty and sweating, his hair disordered and some dried blood on his neck, his jaw very set and his forehead in a strong frown.

"David, unsaddle Daisy—give her a feed and put her in the waggon," he said in a loud quick tone, without a word of greeting. "Sam, help your uncle. Lady Fairfax and you, Penninah, and the children, must all go at once into the town."

"We are ready, John," I said, rising.

"Where is Sir Thomas?" demanded Lady Fairfax.

"By now he will be in Bradford," said John. "I left him and the remnant of our half of the army, going down Holroyd Lane."

"Was there much slaughter, John?" I asked him, trembling.

"Aye. And plenty more of our men have run off into Lancashire," said John shortly. "Lister, how much wool have we in the house?"

"Wool, Mester?" began Lister in his maundering way.

"Aye—how many packs of wool?" said John impatiently, striding towards the stairs. "If you know not, out of my way; I'll look for myself."

"There are three packs, Mester, one partly combed," babbled Lister, following him.

"Get them all into the waggon, then," ordered John, halting.

"Where are they to go, Mester John?" asked Lister curiously.

"To hang on the church steeple to protect our lads," replied John. "I won't have them wounded as they fire, this time."

"There's more nor twenty pounds' value in them packs, Mester John," objected Lister. "What with the wool and the workmanship already done on it."

"I'll go beg a fourth from Mrs. Baume," said John, disregarding him.

And this was the man I had once thought miserly.

The summer dusk was falling as we set off down the lane. The poor mare, her flanks dark with sweat, was so exhausted, having carried John all day, that she could not hold up her head, and often stumbled as she put down her feet. But we had not another horse on the place, nor indeed was there a spare animal for miles, they were all employed in one army or the other. Lister led the mare; Lady Fairfax and I and the children and the maids sat on the woolpacks, John and David walked with their guns ready, beside the waggon. The evening was warm and overcast, and the air of urgency which hung over us made it seem sultry and menacing. God alone knows what I went through on that journey. The jolting of the waggon was a cruel suffering to one in my condition. I expected every minute that I should begin with a miscarriage; but however, I eased myself as well as I could on the woolpacks, and Lady Fairfax gave me her pungent smelling-bottle, and somehow I came through it, and reached the Pack Horse Inn without mishap.

The inn was crowded with officers, some dejected almost to weeping point, others shouting angrily. The landlord, almost distracted, came out to receive Lady Fairfax, and conducted her to some small dark rooms—it was but a small hostelry, after all—across the passage from a larger room which he was fitting out with chairs and settles, to be used as a meeting place for the Council of War. I went with her, for in truth there was nowhere else to go.

When we had been there a few moments, disentangling our baggage, Sir Thomas came in. I own I was somewhat

curious as to how a general looked when defeated, but there was no change in his sallow countenance, save that it appeared a trifle less melancholy than usual. He kissed his wife's hand, and—which I thought very pretty—thanked her for enduring the hazards and discomforts of the campaign with him. At this Lady Fairfax smiled broadly, completely happy. Sir Thomas then saw me, and wishing to say something agreeable to me, asked me good-humouredly what my brother had made of the battle. I hardly knew what to say, not wishing to hurt him, so I stammered out:

"He had great difficulty in making it out at all, Sir Thomas."

At this Sir Thomas laughed aloud heartily, and with his fine eyes sparkling he replied:

"C-c-commanders have the same d-d-difficulty, Mrs. Thorpe."

He then withdrew into the council chamber, where we could see Lord Fairfax and the other officers and gentry assembling. They all gazed at Sir Thomas in amazement, having heard him laugh and feeling there was nothing to laugh about. Lord Fairfax was a piteous spectacle; the curl was quite gone out of his moustache, and he lamented continually to his son:

"They told me I should leave the field, but how could I leave the field when I hadn't beat 'em?"

Then at last, urged by his son, Lord Fairfax seated himself at the head of the table and called for order, and the men ranged themselves about him, there not being chairs for all, and John and a man from Halifax I had seen in the fight in December made ready to write notes, and Lord Fairfax in a peevish kind of voice called on his son to speak, and Sir Thomas rose and began in his calm deep voice:

"Gentlemen, we have s-s-suffered a temporary s-s-set-back."

Then the landlord officiously hurried up and shut the doors, so that we heard no more at that time.

I got the children to bed—they protested they would not go, being too greatly excited, but as soon as we laid

them down they went off into a sleep from which a cannon under their ears would not have woken them. Then I sat with Lady Fairfax. The Council lasted for nigh on an hour; at times when the doors were opened briefly for a servant taking in refreshment, we caught a word or two of what was going on; there seemed to be debate whether to try to hold Bradford or Leeds or both or neither. Sir Thomas wished his father to retire to Leeds, to hold it, while he himself did what he could in Bradford; but it was clear that most of the officers thought Bradford a death-trap, and wanted only to be out of it.

"It is the c-c-cause of the P-p-parliament in the north, not our own skins, gentlemen, that we are deb-b-bating," said Sir Thomas at length in a tone of vexation.

While they were at it, a messenger came from Hull, and was admitted; the landlord told us that his news was very good, namely that the well-affected in Hull, which was a very strong walled place, had risen and imprisoned their treacherous governor, and were ready to receive the Lord General if he cared to go to them. This made the officers all the more determined to get off to Leeds as being on the road to Hull, and finally they decided that Lord Fairfax should go there at once, that very night, with the major part of the army, while Sir Thomas by his own wish should stay and defend Bradford.

This loyalty to our town made every citizen of Bradford feel a deep love for Sir Thomas's person, which they expressed by a most energetic and faithful service; as I heard later, they busied themselves at the works all night, taking turns to stand on guard and to labour with spade and shovel strengthening the centries.

For my part, having slept at last from sheer exhaustion, I was awakened at dawn by the thunder of the Royalist ordnance. They had planted their two great "pocket pistols" in the same places as before, and were battering away at the church and sending an occasional shot down Kirkgate. As soon as we had broken our fast the children and I and Lady Fairfax went out into Kirkgate to watch the fight. It was a bright sunny summer's day again, the air very

clear so that we could see long distances. The woolpacks were already in position, hanging by ropes from the pinnacles of the steeple; they made a fine protection for our men firing from the windows, and it seemed from what the crowd of watchers told us that the Royalists were aiming shot at them. Once or twice the packs swayed in the breeze, or in the startle of the air caused by the firing, and then the crowd drew a dismayed breath; when the packs settled to their place again they called out cheerfully. Lady Fairfax and I wondered where our husbands were, but had no means of discovering; Sam, who had escaped from my hand and clambered out of a window on to the roof of the Pack Horse, said that the Redcoats were closing in all round Bradford—"thousands of them," said Sam—and he could see our men opposing them at the siege-works. The Royalists were between us and The Breck, he said, and a great crowd of them were clustered round Bolling Hall. This last seemed likely enough, Sir Richard Tempest of Bolling Hall being such a very strong Royalist. About noon, while we were within, resting, there came some very loud shouting in the distance; we went out and saw that the Royalist shot had partly cut through the cord by which one of the packs was hanging, so that it dangled crookedly. Even as we watched, the cannon roared again, the cord parted with a jerk and the pack fell headlong. A loud shouting and clapping of hands came from the redcoats up by Barker End at this, and a hooting from our people in Kirkgate. Some of our men came out of the church and tried to pull up the pack again, but their exposure to the ordnance made the attempt too hazardous.

All day long the firing continued, from their ordnance and ours, which was planted in cover of the steeple, and from both sides' musketry. It seemed to me that the Royalists made little headway, so I was pretty cheerful, but when Sir Thomas and John and such officers as were left came in to their dinner, I saw that they looked glum and dejected. From the snatches of their talk we heard, we learned the true situation. It seemed we had only one small cannon, the

rest having been lost at Adwalton, and very few barrels of powder, and already the match was exhausted, the men using untwisted cords dipped in oil in its stead. The Royalists doubtless knew or guessed this shortage, and were firing hotly, to draw our reply and thus exhaust our ammunition and bring the siege to a swift conclusion. The officers, to my amazement, were already begging Sir Thomas to send out a trumpeter to the Earl of Newcastle and treat for conditions of surrender, while yet the defence would appear in good case to the enemy. But Sir Thomas frowned and denied them, for he wished, he said, to delay the Earl before Bradford as long as possible, to give his father and the main army of the north a chance to get to Hull before the Earl discovered their absence. This was clearly such sound strategy that the officers perforce agreed to it, and they stood to their posts again, as did all our men, with much resolution. The night was therefore disturbed and uneasy with disjointed shooting.

The next day was Lord's Day. While I was dressing little Moll—for Lady Fairfax's maid was busy with a sweetheart she had among the soldiers, and our own, being niece to the Pack Horse folk, was busy about the inn—we heard a loud drum and a curious signal on the trumpet, which delighted the general's lady, for she said it was a trumpeter come from the enemy, doubtless with conditions. The officers about Sir Thomas begged him to accept the conditions, whatever they were—as we could not help hearing, for we were so cramped in our quarters, we seemed beneath the men's feet and in their way whenever they entered the house.

"If they are honourable for us to take, and safe for the inhabitants of this town," said Sir Thomas quickly without a single stammer: "I will accept them," and he sent his safe-conduct for the Earl's messenger.

A captain was presently introduced, very fine in a scarlet coat and a feathered hat and embroidered gloves, and somewhat contemptuous in his manner, to say that to spare useless bloodshed the Earl proposed a parley until sundown, to discuss conditions of surrender. Sir Thomas agreed to a

cessation of hostilities during the parley, and sent two of our own captains—not men I knew, gentry from further east in the county—to treat with the Earl about conditions.

I gave a great sigh of relief, to think that we should have no more thundering ordnance all day, and perhaps be free afterwards to go our own ways in peace and quietness. It was strange to see how the people of Bradford all came out into the streets and strolled up and down in the sunshine, smiling with happiness for the mere cessation of the cannon. Since the church was in the occupation of our soldiers, Sir Thomas commanded the Bradford under-minister to say prayers and preach in the courtyard of the Pack Horse; this he did, and a goodly congregation attended, all of our family among them.

The two captains were long in returning, and this troubled Sir Thomas. He paced restlessly about the inn, and then began to prick up his ears as though listening, and asked the landlord if there were any vantage point near for seeing over the countryside. Sam whispered in my ear: "The roof, mother," and I sent him to Sir Thomas to tell him, which he did, not with quite as good a bow as I wished, but very clearly. Sir Thomas in spite of some demur from his officers went up to the roof, and came down with his doublet soiled and his mind angered, for he had plainly seen the enemy advancing some ordnance so as to command the heart of the town, on the far bank of the stream opposite the Turls, and also throwing up siege works to the north, beyond Fairgap. This, it seems, was very dishonourable during a cessation for parley, and he sent forth further captains to the Earl to remonstrate, and ask for a speedy return of his commissioners with the conditions. But they came not and they came not, and we could hear continual sounds of movement around the town, and Sir Thomas grew more and more uneasy, and began to suspect the enemy of a design to attack us in spite of the parley. At last towards evening he gave the order to man all the siege works and stand on guard.

It was indeed fortunate that he did so, else had the town

been taken by storm. The captains did not return till after nine o'clock, when it was almost twilight, and the answer they delivered was no answer at all, for they brought no terms for negotiation, but simply a summons to surrender. At this Sir Thomas's face slowly gathered a look of anger such as I had never seen on it before; he threw up his head and was just about to speak when suddenly there broke out a tremendous uproar, thundering of ordnance and crackle of musketry and wild prolonged shouting—the enemy, taking the hour as sundown and the parley as terminated, without any warning trumpet had resumed their attack on Bradford.

The next few hours our little party spent in utter wretchedness. It was plainly the enemy's intention to carry Bradford by storm; first on one side of the town, then on the other, came the roaring of the cannon; the night was almost as light as day, with so many guns firing continually; the reflections flashed in our windows and the echoes shook them. It was useless to try to make the children sleep through such a hideous din, and we did not attempt it; Lady Fairfax took Moll on her lap and held her head tight against her bosom so that the sound should not strike her ears so fearfully; my lads would not consent to this, but they held my hand and pressed close to me. The assault increased in fury; as fast as our men, rallying, beat the Royalists from one trench, they attacked another. A dread rose and rose in my mind about the ammunition; how long would it hold out, expended thus continually?

The question was soon answered.

In the dead of the night there came a lull in the firing. We were so unused to silence that we still shouted at each other, and our voices fell oddly on our numbed ears. In this silence, first Sir Thomas, and later his officers, one by one hastily entered the inn and went to the council chamber. I own frankly that Lady Fairfax opened our door, and tip-toed across the passage and set the door of the room opposite gently ajar, and returned to me smiling mischievously, and we drew chairs near and sat and listened with all our ears.

"Gentlemen, I have s-s-summoned you to council because

it is no longer possible to defend the town," began Sir Thomas abruptly.

This laconic statement excited consternation. Exclamations of surprise, protest, even anger, came from all round the room: "No, no, sir—Why?—We've beaten 'em off now and we will again—they won't assault us again to-night—no; we gave 'em more than they expected," and so on.

"Why run from the t-t-truth?" said Sir Thomas in an impatient tone. "We cannot s-s-sustain another assault. There is but one barrel of powder left, and no match of any kind."

There was a dismal silence.

"Are you proposing to send commissioners to treat with the Earl for honourable surrender, then?" said an oldish voice at length.

"The enemy's notions of what is honourable," said Sir Thomas, "have been s-s-sufficiently revealed to us over the parley this day."

"What are we to do, then?" muttered several in tones of great discouragement.

"There is b-but one thing to d-d-do," said Sir Thomas, "if the town is not to be t-t-taken by storm and the f-f-forces here totally lost to the P-P-Parliament. We must d-d-draw off at once and re-t-t-treat to Leeds."

"But the town is surrounded," objected the elderly voice again.

"I am a-w-ware of it," said Sir Thomas drily. "We must f-f-force a way out."

"It is a desperate adventure," said somebody dubiously.

"I will not enf-f-force it upon anyone," said Sir Thomas. "As I can no longer p-p-provide the f-f-forces under my command with ammunition, I will not require them to hazard themselves on this enterp-prise. The men may shift for themselves if they desire. But let all who wish to make the attempt rep-pair at once, the foot to the Market Cross, the horse to the church, and we will try to b-b-break through on diverse roads, by dint of the sword."

No one spoke.

"The rendez-vous is Leeds, and thence to Hull, where

we may strike a b-blow for Parliament again," said Sir Thomas in a calm cheerful tone. "But if any men of these p-parts p-prefer to b-b-b-betake themselves to help the Parliament's f-forces in Lancashire, their homes being easier of access thence across the hills, I say naught against it." As there was still silence, he added: "Has anyone a b-b-b-better plan?"

"Is it certain there is but one barrel of powder?" asked a voice.

"Certain," replied Sir Thomas. He paused, awaiting further observations, doubtless, for when none spoke he went on impatiently: "Come, gentlemen, there is no t-time to lose. Is this agreed or no?"

"Agreed—agreed," came in despondent voices round the table.

There was some further talk which we did not hear, for Lady Fairfax had sprung up and was bustling about, throwing on her cloak and fastening up her dressing-case.

In a moment or two John came in. He looked fit to drop with fatigue, his dark face grimed with powder and sweat and his shoulders drooping, but his red-rimmed eyes were steady and undaunted.

"The Parliament's forces are withdrawing to Leeds, and Sir Thomas wishes Lady Fairfax and Miss Mary to accompany him," he said in a cool formal tone, designed no doubt to reassure us. "Sir Thomas requests Lady Fairfax to prepare for the journey immediately."

I picked up little Moll and rolled her in her cloak.

"And you, John?" I said. "You and David? Do you go with him?"

"We must," said John, setting his jaw. "Do you take the children and go out to The Brock, Penninah; they will not molest a woman with two children. If there is trouble at Little Holroyd, claim kinship with the Ferrands. Uncle Giles will see no harm comes to you."

He gave me a strange dark look as he said this, and I found nothing to say to him, but stood there silently, holding Moll in my arms.

"Farewell, my little sons," said John, and he stooped and kissed our children. "Thomas, see you keep to your book and become a noble scholar like your Uncle David, and you, Sam, guard your mother till I can come back to you."

His voice shook a little as he said this, and the children wept, much affected.

"John, do not go to Hull," I begged him. "Go over into Lancashire—you can reach us then across the moors."

"What use?" said John. "I could not return to Bradford as things are now. I am quite a noted supporter of Sir Thomas, I assure you—I should be no use to you languishing in a Royalist prison. Come—we must not keep the General waiting on us."

He took Moll from my arms, and led the way down the stairs to the courtyard of the inn, whither Lady Fairfax had already preceded us. Here I felt rather than saw a great bustle of men and horses; the light of the lanterns picked out here a glossy haunch and a spurred boot, there a hand and a rein and the rolling white of a horse's eye; the rest was moving darkness. I saw Lister's face thus, for a brief moment while a lantern swayed; he was white and mournful, as always nowadays.

"Farewell, Pen," said David's voice in my ear. I turned quickly to dissuade him from going, but he prevented me. "Look! John has provided me a horse," said he, drawing the animal towards us by its bridle: "with his usual kindness."

I put back the lock of his fair hair which fell into his eyes, and we kissed, but were broken from our farewells by the sound of Lady Fairfax's voice in a loud jarring.

"I will go with *you*, Tom," she was saying.

"It is not p-p-possible," said Sir Thomas coldly. "I have arranged otherwise."

We turned to look; in the light of a lantern held at arm's stretch by the landlord we saw Lady Fairfax gazing up at her husband, who was already mounted, tearfully. Sir Thomas held little Moll in front of him on the saddle.

"This officer will take you up behind him," went on Sir Thomas, indicating a young captain who stood by in great

embarrassment at the altercation between the general and his lady.

Lady Fairfax did not move, but stood gazing upward.

"Mount, Anne," said Sir Thomas suddenly in a tone quite ferocious.

Lady Fairfax lowered her head, defeated; she tried to pick up her skirts but could not because of her case, so handed it to me to hold for her. We exchanged glances; mine was of commiseration; her face twitched piteously. Then she meekly put her foot on the hands the officer held for her, and mounted. Before she had settled her skirts there came a distant uproar.

"Ride, ride!" cried Sir Thomas in a fury. "That is the foot—we must go now while they divert the enemy's attention."

He wheeled his horse and urged it swiftly through the archway. The others all followed at the trot, and in a moment the yard was empty. And John had left me without a farewell.

The children and I turned slowly away into the inn, and climbed the stairs to the room near the council chamber. Lady Fairfax's maid was there, weeping as she tidied away her mistress's nightgear. When I saw her I started, for I remembered I still held Lady Fairfax's dressing-case; I looked down at it in my hand, and was very sorry.

"Poor thing! The loss of this will put a summit on her troubles. I must take order to send it to her," I thought: "But God knows how, in the present state of the country."

I was so wearied, nay, so completely exhausted by all that had recently happened to me that I felt I had no strength left, bodily or spiritual. I sank down on a chair and looked at my two little lads; they stared back at me with cheeks so pale, heads so drooped, eyes so blinking, that I perceived they were half-dead with sleep, and I determined they and I should have a quiet night here, and not set off for The Breck till it was morning. Though indeed that was not very far off, perhaps, for I thought I saw a lifting of the dark as of dawn coming, against the window-pane. I rose and put the boys to bed—it was hard to keep them

awake long enough to get their little arms out of their doublets—and I was just laying hands on my own gown to shed it, when I heard a great clamour which seemed to come from up beyond the church.

“O God! They are caught! David! John! David!” I thought, and I threw on a cloak and ran downstairs again, my heart beating very heavily.

The landlord and his wife ran out with me into the street, and we all hurried down the hill and turned into Kirkgate. The darkness was thinning, but there was nothing to see, no movement anywhere, except something which seemed to be swinging where a darker grey indicated the church steeple. This swinging object looked very eerie in the half-light, but as we peered it proved to be nothing but a woolpack dangling from the single cord left to it—the only one the Royalists had not brought down by their cannon shot. We listened, straining our ears, imagining we heard shouts and blows and even (once) a woman’s scream, and exchanging conjectures about these fancied sounds with divers fellow-townsmen. Indeed every inhabitant left in Bradford town seemed gathered there, speculating mournfully about the escape or capture of Black Tom, and also about the fate of Bradford. The town had resisted so long and so manfully, said some, that it was likely the Earl of Newcastle would be greatly irritated. Others contended that now the garrison was gone, the enemy could not be hot against mere townsmen, that being not the military usage; others again said that might be so, but the Royalist soldiers would surely sack the town—they had not a good name when it came to plunder and booty.

While we were standing there thus, very wretched and downcast, but easing our hearts a little by being together, the clamour over Barker End seemed to die down; and we began to hope that perhaps our men and Sir Thomas had escaped after all, when we dimly saw a horseman coming towards us through the mist which hung over the beck bottom. The landlord called out a challenge, boldly.

“Who’s there?” he cried, “Friend or foe?”

The answer came back: "Friend—it's David Clarkson."

As he drew near and rose out of the mist I saw that it was indeed my tall slender scholarly brother, leading a tired horse by its bridle.

"Why, David!" I cried, pushing forward to him. "What do you here? What has befallen the others?"

"Sir Thomas has broken through, and John Thorpe, and some twelve others," said David. The little crowd exclaimed joyously, and thronged about him. "I saw them on the hill, well beyond the leaguer. But the rest are all taken—Lady Fairfax amongst them."

The crowd was silent with dismay, but then began a torrent of questions. David replied as fully, I saw, as he could, and repeated all he knew many times, very patiently.

"What ha' they done wi' Lady Fairfax, then?" asked one woman sympathetically.

"I believe they have taken her to Bolling Hall," said David.

"How come it Sir Thomas got away?" said a trooper who just then joined us. "It's not like him to be t'first to run."

"He led the charge," explained David. "He pushed through the enemy, not away from them."

The crowd murmured understanding, and nodded.

"And why did you come back, then, Mester Clarkson?" asked the landlord.

David hesitated. "The charge was so hot. I could make no headway," he answered: "And so I am now seeking Joseph Lister. I thought that he might guide me out of the town, through bye-ways."

"Lister?" said the Pack Horse landlord. "He was in our yard before Sir Thomas left; I saw him holding Mester Thorpe's bridle."

"I saw him there too," I said faintly. "But, David——"

"He's likely gone off to Church Bank, to the Dentons'," suggested a woman.

"I'll seek him that way," said David, turning.

"I will come with you," I said, and though he tried to dissuade me I walked along beside him, while the little crowd broke up and went soberly homeward.

"David," I said, panting a little: "Tell me the truth, the truth! Is John hurt? Is he dead?"

"No, no, Pen," said David in surprise. "I told you I saw him safe through the leaguer, with Sir Thomas."

"Then why are you seeking Lister?" I pressed him.

"I hope he may guide me," began David.

"Since when did David Clarkson, born and bred in Fairgap, need a man to guide him out of Bradford?" I cried angrily. "You are lying to me, David!"

"Well, you are too shrewd for me, Pen," admitted David quietly. "Listen. I heard the Cavaliers who took our fellows say that the Earl of Newcastle has ordered no quarter to be given to Bradford to-morrow when the town is taken. He says: Bradford gave Ferrand no quarter, and they shall have what they gave. He has charged his soldiers to kill every man in the town."

"I do not believe Englishmen will be so barbarous as to carry out such an order," I told him steadily, though my heart beat fast for horror.

"Perhaps not," said David mildly. "But that is the Earl's order. You had best take the children out to The Breck, Pen, and send word for help to Mr. Ferrand. To-morrow will be a dire day for Bradford. Meanwhile, I will try to get out of Bradford with Lister. If they find Lister, if they know him as the one who killed Francis—I think I need not finish my sentence; you understand me. Lister is a danger, not only to himself, but to the town."

"And which side of the leaguer were you when you heard all this?" I demanded harshly. "I know you, David. You have thrown away your safety and come back into Bradford to save Lister, and I cannot bear it!"

"Hush, here he is," said David.

Sure enough he came lolloping towards us; we knew him by his hair, which showed its rusty hue even in this dim light. He was humming a psalm, with his head down and his hands in his pockets. His freckled face fell when he saw David, and he hurried up to us. As usual nowadays, he kept his face turned from me.

"Are you not gone, Mester David?" he cried in distress. "I thought you and Mester John were well on the road to Leeds by this time?"

"My brother Thorpe has broken through the enemy's leaguer with Sir Thomas, but the charge was so hot that I came back again," lied David firmly. "And now I know not what to do to get out of the town. The Cavaliers are closing in upon us. Can you direct me by some lane or bye-way, Joseph?"

It was sad and strange to see how Lister's ugly face brightened. "Aye! Aye!" he cried gladly. "I can lead you a safe way—I know all the bye-ways in the neighbourhood, Mcster David."

"David!" I protested, and ceased, choking.

David turned a stern glance on me. "Do you not wish us to leave Bradford, Pen?" he said.

"Pray, Mistrcess, give me leave to go with David," begged Lister eagerly, speaking to me directly for the first time since he killed Francis. "I will guide him safe—I know where we can wade over the beck, so we need not cross any of the bridges. The Lord will guide our feet into the way of peace. Mester John told me I was to take my orders from you now. Pray give me leave to go with David."

There was a long silence. I thought of Francis, of Lister, of David; of love, of hatred, of revenge; I thought of that word of God which says: Judge not, that ye be not judged; I thought of the day when John said to me: "Thou hast a very gentle heart, Penninah."

"Well," I said brokenly, at length: "Go, and God be with you."

"God bless you, Pen," said David. He added in a low tone: "See that you warn the others."

"This way, Mester David," said Lister cagerly, and he led David down to the side of Bradford beck.

A soft heavy thud from above us startled me; the last woolpack, scorched and torn, had fallen from the steeple to the ground; its cord was still swinging.

A GHOST VISITS A COMMANDER

THEN I KNEW what I must do. I went quickly back to the inn, and took Lady Fairfax's little case in my hand, and slipped out without anyone seeing me—the boys were fast asleep—and set out for Bolling Hall.

At the bridge I met a company of the enemy's foot, but since I had no fear of them, for indeed I would have been glad to die, I walked quietly by and they did not challenge me. It was so with all the soldiers whom I met on the way, though there were many; I pulled up the hood of my cloak to conceal my face, and walked steadily on, and though one or two made lewd jokes about my being abroad at that hour, they did not hinder me or stay me. So I came to the gates of Bolling Hall, a very fine tall large house standing in parkland with handsome spreading trees. The birds were just beginning their first twitterings as I reached there, I remember. No one took notice of me till I came close up to the house, when a couple of scarlet-coated guards from a troop there lowered their pikes at me, though quite good-humouredly, and asked me my business.

"I am maid to Lady Fairfax," I said, "and have brought her dressing-case that she sent for."

"I have heard something of that, I believe," said one of the soldiers, rubbing his unshaven chin and looking at the case thoughtfully. "There was a great to-do over it last night when my lady was brought in."

My heart leaped with joy, and I thought: the hand of the Lord is with me; but I stayed quiet and still, not trying to hurry the man's decision.

"Well—come with me, mistress, and I'll take you to my

officer," he said at length, and he led me into the Hall by the back way.

Whether the soldiers there had stayed up through the night because of the night's assault, or had risen early for a new morning attack, I do not know, but the place was full of them, all awake and laughing and shouting. My trooper took me into the great hall, a room larger than any I had ever seen, very high, with long high windows all along one side of it, so that the room was very light; across the opposite side, high up, I spied a gallery, which ran, I supposed, to the bedchambers. This great high hall was also full of redcoats; some eating and drinking at a huge long table, others polishing their pikes and muskets, others again gaming. All seemed to be talking as loudly as they could, swearing and laughing, and I was much frightened by the din and the confusion.

"Wait here, mistress," said my trooper, and he very kindly up-ended a buffet full of coats and breast-plates, so that they all slid off to the ground with a fearful clangour, and gave me the buffet to sit on. A group in shirt-sleeves who were gaming on the floor near by looked round and shouted at him for doing so, and seeing me seemed inclined to bandy jokes with me, but the trooper, who spoke in a kind of drawling way so that I hardly understood what he said—I suppose he came from a far-off part of England—bade them mind their manners, for I was maid to Lady Fairfax. I trembled lest there should be some lad from the neighbourhood there who would know me, but God was with me, and I was not recognised. The trooper knocked at a door nearby and opened it, and a great burst of noise, shouts and laughter, came out, and a smell of wine, and I could see that the room was crowded with captains, lolling in their chairs, some with their scarlet coats off, drinking and taking their ease. I shrank back into my corner, for I was much more afraid of the officers than of the men, ordinary common folk seeming to me usually kindly unless especially provoked.

"Well, moon-face, what dost thou want so early in the morning?" called one of these captains.

At once all the officers fell to singing: *So early in the morning, before the break of day*, beating time on the table with their tankards.

"There is some woman here, maid to Lady Fairfax, with a case!" shouted my trooper through the din, jerking his thumb over his shoulder in my direction.

"What? I can't hear a word of thy discourse, moon-face," shouted the officer. "Peace, friends, peace! Or we shall have the Earl thumping on his floor again and sending down a request that we moderate our noise."

This somewhat sobered them, and the din subsided enough for the man to be heard when he repeated:

"There is a woman here, says she is maid to Lady Fairfax, come with a case."

"Oho! A woman!" exclaimed the officer. "Is she worth looking at, moon-face?"

"Aye, sir, she is quite an eye-full," replied the trooper, laughing: "But I judge she is not the kind to care for glances from the gentry."

"Give me my coat," said the officer with decision, and he stretched out his hand for it.

But luckily for me the other officers joked with him and would not let him have it, passing it down from hand to hand and throwing it across the table, and I in sheer fright gathered all my strength and made an attempt upon my enterprise. I slipped behind the soldier and ran up the stairs unseen. Upstairs I found various branching passages lined with panelled wood, all looking alike and very confusing, but I strove to judge which room would be above the one where the officers were carousing, and the hand of the Lord guided me, and I saw a servant come out of a door bearing a scarlet coat very much laced, and when he had passed by, I shrinking into an alcove the while, I stepped out and pushed on the door and it opened and I entered the chamber, and so I found myself where I sought to be, namely in the presence of the Earl of Newcastle.

I knew it was he who sat there in his shirt-sleeves, smoking a long pipe and reading from a book of Latin poetry, for

he was in truth a very fine gentleman. He had an abundance of light brown hair, not golden like my love's, but still fair and silky enough, and very much curled artificially, dressed low over his forehead and curling thickly in his neck. He had a handsome, aquiline, dissipated face, with very bright hazel eyes which wore a look of condescending amusement, and a curling brown moustache and beard, very smooth and neatly trimmed. At first sight he appeared quite a young man, not much older than Francis, but when I looked again I saw the lines across his forehead and the pouches beneath his eyes and a few threads of grey in his hair, and I judged him to be in middle life, between forty-five and fifty probably. His shirt was of the whitest linen, with the finest and handsomest lace at the wrists that I had ever seen.

I threw back my hood.

"My lord," said I.

He started and turned to me, and at once that look came on his face which a sensual man wears when a personable woman appears to show him special favour. When one loves the man who wears it, one perhaps loves the look; otherwise, to a modest woman it is very hateful. The Earl rose to his feet, wearing that look and smiling, and he made me a very low bow, mocking me, and said:

"To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit, madam?"

"I have business with you, my lord," I said, "concerning the town of Bradford."

At this his face changed; he frowned and became the commander.

"Who are you?" he said.

"I am Penninah Thorpe, wife to John Thorpe of Little Holroyd," I told him.

He frowned again. "I have heard of your husband, mistress," he said. "He is a pestilential Puritan, a purveyor of faction, the follower of Fairfax and the core of the defence of Bradford. If he were here I would shoot him out of hand as a most damnable traitor to His Majesty."

"I have no fear for my husband," I said coldly. "He is a man well able to take care of himself."

"How came you here?" demanded the Earl.

"I brought this case to Lady Fairfax," I said, showing it.

At this the Earl smiled a little. "Well, I am grateful to you for that at least, Mrs. Thorpe," said he: "For I have heard enough of that case this night to last me a lifetime. Lay it here."

He motioned with his hand towards the table where he had been sitting; it was covered with books and papers, and at one side lay a viol.

"And now, good-day, madam," said the Earl curtly. "You shall be rewarded for bringing the case."

"Rewarded!" I exclaimed, stepping back, an angry colour in my face. "I want no reward, my lord. I used the case as a means of access to your lordship."

"Well, tell your errand," said the Earl impatiently. "Tell your errand quickly."

"I am sorry to keep you from Vergil, my lord," said I, glancing at his book: "But I will not do so for long. I hear you have ordered that, for Captain Ferrand's sake, no quarter shall be given to Bradford. I have come to ask you to pity Bradford and revoke the order."

"I have given the order and will not revoke it," said the Earl, speaking quickly, with a hard decision. "Captain Ferrand was cruelly murdered. Bradford gave him no quarter—it shall have what it gave. An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, Mrs. Thorpe—as a Puritan doubtless you know your Bible."

"But you are exacting a hundredfold repayment," I told him quietly.

"The whole population of Bradford is not worth Francis Ferrand's little finger," cried the angry Earl. "He was a bright spirit, quick and loving; there was a kind of glory about him, he gave forth air and fire. I ever likened him in my mind to Shakespeare's Mercutio—but as a Puritan you are doubtless not a playgoer, mistress. That is his viol," he said, his voice changing as he pointed to the instrument on the table.

"Do you suppose we in Bradford do not grieve for Francis?" I said steadily. "He was my husband's cousin. We knew him when young; we all loved him. He was killed in error, out of ignorance not cruelty, and Bradford mourned his death."

"That is a parcel of words for children," said the Earl impatiently. "Bradford mourned for him! Indeed! I tell you," he said, his voice quite breaking: "I loved that boy as a son."

"I loved him as the father of the child in my womb," said I.

There was a silence. The Earl stared at me, amazed.

"Mean you to tell me," he began diffidently; then, reading the truth in my face, he gave a hard laugh and twisted his moustache and said: "It seems your husband is not so well able to look after himself as you say, mistress!"

I stood and supported the insult, which in truth I deserved. After a while I found my voice.

"I love Francis Ferrand," I said. "I have always loved him since I was a child, and when I am an old woman I shall still love him. I saw him killed. But why let his death breed further desolation? To burn and slay in Bradford will not restore him to life, but only make others equally wretched with you and me. Pity poor Bradford!"

"Are you wretched to have lost Francis, Mrs. Thorpe?" said the Earl in a strange tone.

"So wretched that I care not whether I live or die," I said.

"But you have the child—you have Francis's child," the Earl said quickly. "What is your name? By what name did Francis call you?"

I told him: "Penninah. In his joyous moments he called me Pen."

"All moments were joyous with Francis Ferrand," said the Earl. "Perhaps his child will prove the same, Penninah."

I could not speak for tears. The Earl turned aside and paced up and down the chamber slowly. At last he halted before me, and gazed at me very earnestly, his hands behind his back.

"And it is you, you, Francis Ferrand's love and the mother of his child," he said: "who ask me to pity Bradford?"

"I do not wish any other woman to feel such grief as I do," I answered him.

"And what am I to say to that poor old man, his father?" muttered the Earl.

"You can tell him my secret," I said.

The Earl looked at me, as it seemed with some admiration. "I shall not do that," he said. "I shall never tell that. You are a brave woman, Penninah Thorpe," he went on, "as well as a beautiful one. There is something of poetry about you, like a heroine of old times. Allow me to say without disrespect that I envy Francis. For his sake and yours I will countermand the order; Bradford shall be sacked but not put to the sword."

"The Lord show the light of His countenance upon you, and bless you," I said, and I stretched out my hand to him, much moved.

"Thank you, Penninah Thorpe," said the Earl, bowing over my hand in a very courtly fashion: "Yours is one of the few blessings I shall value."

Then he straightened himself, and sighed, and rubbed one eye with his hand, as if very tired.

"War is a weary business," he said. "I will give the case to Lady Fairfax. You had best go back to Bradford quickly. I will write you a safe-conduct."

He rang a little hand-bell which stood on the table, and while he waited for the servant's coming he said to me in his ordinary tone of jesting condescension:

"I am sending Lady Fairfax back to Tom to-day in a coach, properly guarded."

"That is chivalrous—or is it the ordinary custom of war?" I said.

The Earl shrugged his shoulders, and I knew that it was not customary, but a gallant act on his part.

"I would not deprive Tom of her for worlds," he said, laughing. "I prefer to keep Bradford."

To

"Pity poor Bradford," I reminded him softly.

The servant entered. I was standing by a panel of the wall, with my hood drawn up; I daresay my face was white enough from emotion, and I held myself stiffly. At all events the man, I believe, took me for an apparition; for he cried out and fled, crossing himself.

"What a plague is wrong with the servants in this house?" cried the Earl, stamping to the table and ringing the bell again impatiently. The bell came apart in his hand. "Oh, be hanged to it," said he, looking at the clapper ruefully.

"That was Francis's saying," said I, and suddenly I felt as if my heart broke in two as I stood there, and I could restrain my grief no longer. "O let me go, let me go!" I cried, and I stumbled blindly away, putting aside the Earl's hand, and fled down a little private stairway and out of the house and into the park, and cast myself down at the foot of a tree, and wept bitterly.

I AM ALONE

IT WAS so long before the passion of my grief exhausted itself, and I then felt so weak and so averse from life, that the morning was well advanced by the time I had gathered my courage and dragged myself back to Bradford. Indeed I do not believe I should ever have returned, I should have cast myself into the beck and gladly drowned, had I not had children awaiting me and depending on me. But a mother cannot desert her children, and so at last I entered the doors of the Pack Horse and trailed my tired and heavy body upstairs.

Sam was still fast asleep, his breathing sweet and steady; but Thomas lay awake and looked but poorly. The way his sad little face brightened when he saw me almost repaid me for my return to life. He sat up in bed and held out his arms and said: "Mother!" and I sat down beside him and hugged him, and he allowed himself to be fondled without any of the manly reservations he and his brother had lately thought it proper to make on childish caresses. His cheek was flushed, his head hot and his eyes heavy, and when I asked he confessed that he had vomited. I hesitated, perplexed as to whether he was fit to walk through the hot sun as far as Little Holroyd, and the landlady coming in I put my doubt before her.

She told me I was of course very welcome to stay. But I could hear in her voice that though she tried to mean this truly she could not, and I suddenly saw that in her eyes we were now the family of a man whom the Royalists regarded as a damnable traitor, and therefore not good company when the Royalists were about to sack the town. Her next words confirmed my guess, for without looking directly at me she went on:

"'Tis said the Earl will complete the leaguer to-day, and to-morrow enter the town."

"Then I am better out of it," said I, and watched her face brighten.

Sighing, I woke Sam and dressed Thomas. The poor child clung to me, hardly able to stand, as I fastened his buttons, and from time to time shivered down his backbone. Sam was a trifle bad-tempered and sullen, but I did not scold him; I knew what his loyal heart was suffering over the defeat of his heroes, his father and Sir Thomas. The air of the inn was stifling to us, who were used to the fresh country breezes at The Breck, and I thought we should all feel better when we were outside the town. I called for our maid, but instead her aunt came, and told me, colouring as she spoke, that they thought it best she should not leave them during this trouble. I could not blame them, for I judged I should have acted the same by a kinswoman of my own, so I gave a bundle of necessaries to Sam, and took Thomas by the hand, and without any further word descended and set out. The girl herself, tearful and angry, stood in the doorway and cried out that it was not her doing, for her part she wished to come with me, it was a shame and not her doing; and the landlord, looking troubled, for indeed he was a very honest godly man, said all in a breath that my reckoning had been paid by Sir Thomas, the girl's wages should be returned, as soon as the country was settled she should come again to me, that he had a great respect for John Thorpe and was very sorry.

These intimations of our changed state were very disagreeable and disconcerting to me. Without much thinking about it or being over-proud of this score, I had always taken it for granted that I had a good standing in Bradford town—both the Clarksons and the Thorpes had always been well respected, if for different reasons, and of late John had been much looked up to, and his advice followed. The notion that the Thorpes of Little Holroyd could ever be anything but folk of solid substance and desirable acquaintance had never entered my head before, and now that it

was thus forced in, it gave me a strange feeling of uncertainty and fear, a kind of painful hollowness. Suddenly, as we trailed along the street in the hot sunshine, I longed for John so keenly that I could hardly forbear crying his name, and when Sam innocently chose just this moment to ask when his father would be home, I fear I answered him sharply.

As we approached the bridge I saw scarlet coats on it, and my heart beat heavily. Sure enough the soldiers stopped us. They asked my name. Taught by my new fear, I did not give it; I roughened my voice, and speaking like our Sarah, said only that we dwelled in Little Holroyd. The corporal in charge said doubtfully he would consult his officer, and when I pressed him to let us through raised his hand in an exhorting way and said:

"Now, missis! There's nowt gained by rushing!"

Since his speech showed that he was a Yorkshireman, I was terrified lest some of his troop or his officer should be men of our parts, who would know me, and I stood in an agony, when fortunately little Thomas, overcome by the delay in the hot sun, saved all for us by vomiting.

"You see the child is sick," I said.

"Aye, poor little lad. Well, pass on then," said the corporal, sniffing. "But see you stay in Little Holroyd when you get there."

We moved on thankfully. When we reached the shade of the trees in the lane I asked Thomas if he would care to sit and rest, but though the poor child was pale and trembling he would not delay us, but pressed on manfully.

The Breck was empty. There was no one in the fields or the laithe or the house, no one in the kitchen or the loom-chamber. Though the day was so warm the house struck a chill on me, the air within being stale and motionless, and dust coating the furnishings. Everything was just as we had left it on Friday night—even to a pair of Sir Thomas's boots which lay cross-toed on the floor of his room, awaiting polish—save that two of our cows had been milked, and the milk stood in crocks in the kitchen. The milk had curdled in the

heat, much to the disgust of Sam, who had always a great thirst on him. I set him to fetch water for us from the beck, while I put Thomas to bed; between vomit and flux the poor lad was very uncomfortable, and I was kept busy all that day attending him. I did not judge, however, that he was very ill, for I had seen him in these upsets before when over-excited; his spirit was sensitive and seemed in too close connection, as I sometimes jestingly told him, with his stomach. Towards evening my judgment, thank God, proved accurate; the heat of his body sank and he ceased to vomit, and he smiled at me and asked for a drink of milk. By now the cows were lowing in distress, for it was past their evening milking hour; since no one had come near us all day I told Sam we should have to milk them ourselves, and set to work on it. I had never touched a cow before and made but a poor job of it, but Sam did splendidly. When we had finished and made ourselves some supper, we were so tired that the longing for sleep overcame all our other troubles; we fell into bed and slept round the clock.

It was the sound of drums which waked us. The thunderous beat went on and on while I rose and prepared oatmeal porridge and we ate it; when at last the drumming ceased there came a great clamour, screams and shouts and cries, from down over Bradford. I was so uneasy I made Thomas rise and dress, though he was scarcely fit for it, and I bolted the doors and put out the fire and drew everything away from the windows, so that the house might look as though it were empty, and I made the children sit very quiet by the hearth and I read them the story of Samuel out of the Bible. While I was just reading how the Lord called Samuel for the third time, I saw my Sam's jaw drop and his eyes grow very round, and I knew he had seen a scarlet coat down the lane, and within myself I trembled, and I prayed God to give me strength to bear this calamity and save my children.

Sure enough in a few moments there was a sudden rush of feet across our yard, and a confused shouting, and then a shaking of our door and a great banging on it. The

timbers quivered beneath the blows but did not yield. Then a scarlet coat came to the window and shouted at me. I turned my head towards him very slowly and calmly, as if I had no fear of him, and pretended not to understand what he was saying, but his face then grew crimson and grimacing with anger, and he lifted the butt of his musket and swung it through the window quarry, so that it broke and fell to the ground crackling and tinkling.

"Oppen t'door or it'll be t'worse for you!" he shouted, sticking his angry face through the opening.

"We'll burn door down if tha doesn't!" shouted one of those at the door.

"Nay, shoot bolts off; that'll be t'gainest way," advised another.

"I am alone here with my children—we have done you no harm," I cried.

"Oppen t'door and no harm'll happen you," said the man at the window grimly.

I hesitated. At my silence they showered blows from their musket butts on the door, striking all in unison; the timbers still did not yield, but a nail sprang from one of the bolts.

"I will open, I will open!" I cried, terrified, and I ran across to the door. With trembling fingers I shot back the bolts; half a dozen redcoats at once rushed into the house, almost knocking me over as they passed.

"Get out o' t'road, missis, and nowt'll happen thee," shouted the man who had broken the window, who seemed to be their Corporal. "Now, lads, oats and meal first, remember!"

A shout of derision greeted this. "There's better things here nor fodder," said one, snatching down the candlesticks from the mantel.

"General's order is oats and meal," insisted the Corporal obstinately. "See if there's any sacks upstairs to put 'em in—he's a clothier, so I reckon there will be."

One soldier went up the stairs two at a time, and a cry came down to us.

"Sam! Sam!" I cried in an agony, running to the foot of the stairs.

"And who's Sam?" said the Corporal roughly, holding me back with an arm across my breast.

"My little son—younger than this one," I explained, pointing to Thomas.

The Corporal still seemed disinclined to believe me, but the soldier just then appeared, holding Sam by the ear so tightly that the child's eyes watered with the pain.

"Let him go!" I cried in a passion. "You're hurting him—he's only a child."

"So this is Sam. He was sitting with his mother here a two-three minutes ago," said the Corporal suspiciously. "What didst go up there for, lovey, eh?" he demanded, bending his knees to bring his face to the level of the child's. "I only went to fetch my brother's cloak," said Sam crossly. "He's sick and feels cold."

That this was a lie I knew from Thomas's face, and I guessed Sam was hiding something beneath the cloak which he clasped in his arms.

"He was sick all yesterday," I murmured.

"Well, let it go," said the Corporal ill-humouredly, and he jerked Sam away from the soldier by his arm and sent him spinning. "Sit thee down there, missis," he said to me, pointing to a buffet by the hearth, "and keep thy children close and hold thy tongue, or it'll be worse for thee."

So I sat there, and kept my children close, and held my tongue, and watched the soldiers sack my house.

At first I suffered a fresh anguish with everything on which they laid their hands, but I had had a surfeit of grief of late, and soon could suffer no more, but fell into a kind of stupor in which I merely watched with a dull interest to see what they would take. First, throwing back the lid of the ark so roughly that one of the hinges broke, they heaped the meal into a sack, and then they tore down our cheeses and our hams. Through the window I saw them driving off the cows and the sheep, and chasing the hens and geese; such a lowing and bleating, such a squawking and hissing, you

never heard. When they had cleared the eatables, they turned to our finest and most easily carried goods; the only two gold pieces of John's which had not gone to the cause were found by the Corporal, who chinked them joyously and put them in his pouch. Then the pewter went, and every trencher we had in the house, and every candlestick; and the spits and the ladles, and the kettles and pans. The soldiers ran upstairs, and came down carrying our blankets and coverlets rolled up in bundles, and my apparel and John's and some of the Fairfaxs' which they had left, and the children's, and a piece or two of unsold cloth which lay in the loom chamber. The two men who had these bore them on their shoulders in the proper fashion, so that I knew they had been cloth-workers, and this, with their Yorkshire voices, was very bitter to me, for it seemed as if they were our own folk betraying us. They came from York, I supposed; there were many cloth-workers in York, and folk there were mostly Royalists, because of the Minster clergy and the gentry. Some of the other soldiers laughed at these two for choosing such cumbersome wares, but they took the chaff easily, knowing well the cloth's value.

More soldiers continually poured in on us, for those that passed by, seeing the stream of goods going down the lane on men's backs, turned in to The Breck hopefully.

By this time those already in the house had found, alas, our casks of home-brewed ale and tapped them, and so they grew drunk and quarrelsome, and resented badly the advent of the newcomers. A soldier coming down with one of our feather mattresses spread out flat over his head, not being able to see in front of him ran into one just entering; a loud fierce quarrel ensued, they came to blows, and trampled all over the mattress. One of them wore spurs, the cover tore and the feathers flew out. Their fellow-soldiers had to separate them; when the first rolled up the bed and went off, leaving a trail of feathers behind him. Those who came late now began to be vexed because there was nothing left for them; they pushed the others aside from the ale-barrel, and tried to snatch their booty, whereupon the first-comers

shouted loud reproaches—the din was so great we felt quite stunned. One went tramping angrily upstairs, and then the noise of his boots stopped, so that I wondered what he had found to steal, and when he came down I cried out, for it was our cradle he bore under one arm. I could not bear that my children's cradle, which was full of tender memories, should be tossed about in the hands of a Royalist trooper; I sprang up and seized it and tried to drag it from him, but he put his free hand on my breast and pushed me aside. A drunken soldier who stood swaying by reproved him:

"Leave cradle," he said in his thick drunk speech, shaking his finger at him: "Lady needsh cradle."

The other gave a loud coarse laugh. "Aye, that's plain to be seen," said he. "But when she needs it she can come and buy it." And off he went with old Mr. Thorpe's finely carved gift under his arm.

Some who stood by, thinking there was more to be found upstairs, staggered up again, and finding nothing, began to break up the beds for fuel. The sound of great blows, and heavy thuds, and splintering wood came down to us.

"If only they leave the looms!" I prayed, and, perhaps because the looms were very heavy, or perhaps because some were men used to looms who liked not to break the tools of their trade, they spared them.

After a while there was nothing movable left in the house; even the books had been carried off, though amid expressions of disgust that there was nothing better left, all thumbed and dirtied by the soldiers' rough hands. The din began to die away a little when two soldiers, newcomers, half drunk, came stumbling in. Without a glance at us they staggered rapidly all over the house, meeting again at the foot of the stairs.

"Nowt left here," said one disgustedly.

"Let's take table," suggested the other.

The first soldier looked at our long oaken table dubiously.

"Think we could move it?" he said, scratching his head.

"We can nobbut try," said the other.

Staggering each to an end they seized the table. It was a very solid heavy piece, made in Queen Elizabeth's days for the wedding of old Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe, and they could not lift it; they dragged it inch by inch towards the door, so that both table and floor grated and shuddered. In the porch, praise be, it stuck; they tried to turn it sideways, but being partly drunk and not very clever, they mixed their commands to each other and somehow got it up-ended, so that Sam laughed and even I could scarce forbear a smile. One had clambered beneath and was butting at the top with his head, when there came some sort of a trumpet call and a drum, evidently summoning them back to their lines, for they dropped their hands from the table and peered over at each other, startled.

"Come away!" cried the one outside, and he pulled at his coat and hitched up his musket and ran off, though somewhat unsteadily. The one within gave a last look round, then staggered towards me.

"Up wi' thee, missis!" he cried thickly, and snatched at my arm and jerked me up, and pulled out the buffet on which I was sitting. He ran to the door with it and tried to put it through our table, but caught the legs in a manner which was truly somewhat comical, and then remembered the back door and disentangled the buffet and ran out through the kitchen with it. We heard his uneven footsteps, and his shouts to his companion, dying away down the lane.

And so at last they were all gone. At first we could not believe it, and stood cowering together, pressed back against the wall by the hearth; but when the silence continued, Sam darted off and peeped into the kitchen, and shook his head and mouthed at us to say it was empty. A distant drum brought him back like an arrow to my hand, but soon he was off again, and the stillness confirmed his report that there were no Royalists anywhere in the house. We crept out, and I looked about to see what was left to us.

Very little, indeed. The looms, the table, the empty meal ark and the big cupboard, which was also broken and empty, were all I could find. The floors were spattered with feathers

and trodden meal, and scraps of paper from our books and John's accounts, and sticky runnels of ale and milk, and here and there a splintered piece of wood. It seemed that Thomas had unknowingly clutched our Bible from which I was reading to them, firmly beneath his arm, for he now discovered it there, but otherwise there was nothing; there was not a morsel of food, not a spoonful of drink, not a stick of fuel, not a cushion or a chair, not a pair of stockings or a cloak, left in the house.

"Sam, what hid you beneath your cloak?" I said, remembering.

Sam, blushing and hanging his head, drew out Sir Thomas Fairfax's boots.

Then I laughed and cried together, and knelt down and drew my little sons into my arms, and we mingled our tears, and kissed, and put cheek to cheek, and so eased our hearts of their heavy burden and regained some courage.

After a time I smoothed back the boys' hair, and wiped their faces with my skirt, and stood up, and tried to bethink myself how to get food for them.

First we tried to move the table from the door, but we could not shift it—the boys had not the strength, and I was afraid to strain myself. So we left it there, and perhaps it was better so, for the door was torn from one of its hinges and leaning sideways, and the table served to block the doorway. I set Sam to get water, and Thomas to clean the floor—there was no broom left to us, but I made him gather some leafy twigs and sweep as well as he could with those. And then Sam came in and said he had ventured a small way down the lane, and had found quite a heap of meal by the hedgerow—some soldier had emptied out the meal to put something of greater value in the sack, he thought. So we all went out to this blessed heap, and the boys scooped up the meal with their fingers and I held out my skirt to hold it, and we carried it back to the house with great gladness. I set Thomas to gather twigs, and Sam to chop some larger wood, and by a good chance I found an old pan with a hole in it below in the cellar, and so we made shift to get

ourselves a fire and some supper, and to cheer the children I made merry over it.

And so the time passed, and it came night, and we heaped ourselves close together on the floor, and the children slept. But for my part I lay long awake, turning over and over in my mind where John and David were, and how I was to nourish my children.

The next day we heard the drums again, and the women's screams, as strong as yesterday but not as frequent. We kept close in the house and lived on water and some handfuls of oatmeal; but I knew this could not go on, and spent the hours tormenting myself as to how and where I could obtain succour. Twice Royalists came to our door, but seeing the barrenness within went away again without troubling us, save for the fright, which indeed was pain enough.

Then, early next morning, we had another visitor. I was stooping over a little fire we had made in the kitchen, blowing on it to help the green wood to a glow, when I heard footsteps by the front, and an exclamation. My heart jumped; the moments while the steps rounded the house and came in at the back were some of the longest I remember. Then the door was pushed timidly open, and Lister's freckled face peered in. It was criss-crossed with long red scratches.

"Are there any malignants here?" he whispered.

"No," I said. "It is safe. Come in." I stared at him, amazed, over my shoulder as he crept in, and my slow mind came round to ask why I was so greatly amazed, and then I knew, and I stood up from the fire holding my hands apart from my dress because they were dirty, and I cried harshly: "Lister, where is David?"

He hung his head and cracked his scratched knuckles, and looked aside, and I screamed at him:

"Where is David? Where is David?"

"I've seen Mester John—he's safe at Colne over in Lancashire," croaked Lister. "The Lord hath delivered him from his cruel enemies. He gave me this gold for you."

I took the gold pieces from his hand and threw them down, and I stepped close up to him—I daresay my check

was pale and my eyes glittering, for he backed away from me looking affrighted—and I seized him by the arms and shook him, and I panted:

"Where is David? Is he dead? Is David dead? Lister! Tell me instantly!"

"No, no, he's not dead," said Lister crossly. "The young man liveth."

"He's at Colne with John, then?" I cried joyously.

"No, he's not at Colne." Lister hung his head again, and finally got out in a piteous tone, his voice dying away from shame as he spoke: "He's a prisoner."

"A prisoner? And you come here and tell me that? He threw away his safety to save you, and you deserted him? Shame on you for a coward, Joseph Lister!" I cried, and my voice rang through the house, fierce and loud with anger.

"Under favour, Mistress, I did not desert him," muttered Lister.

"God grant me patience!" I burst out. "Will you tell me what has happened to my brother, or must I strike you?"

"I did not desert him, I but hid in a holly bush," repeated Lister obstinately. "In a secret place shall He hide me. A man on horseback espied us and came riding fast towards us with his sword in his hand—I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord—I must tell you we were four by that time; we met with two troopers who had left their horses in the town, and hoped to get away on foot, after we had waded the beek, that is, Mistress."

"Lister," I commanded, driving my nails into my palms to keep from raging at him: "Tell me this tale orderly, from its beginning. What did you after I left the two of you in Kirkgate? Leave your texts, and speak plain."

"I led him to the far bridge," explained Lister in a tone of grievance: "It was in my mind to get up towards Clayton and then turn Haworth way and go to Colne."

"Why to Colne?" said I. I looked about for some place to sit, for I saw the story would be long, but the soldiers

had left us nothing, so I wiped my hands on my apron and leaned against the hearth side.

"Because I reckoned I should find Mester John i' Colne," replied Lister, sullenly. "You had begged him to go to Lancashire, so I reckoned he would go there—more fool he," he added, muttering. "The woman's heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands. There was a foot company at the bridge, yet I think they did not see us, so we ran on the right hand of them, and then we waded over the water, and hearing a party of horse come down the lane towards the town, we laid us down in the side of the corn, and again they did not see us. The Lord hid us from their eyes. Then we went along in the shade of the hedge, and then, thinking we were past the danger of the leaguer, we took to the highway. And here we met with the two men that were troopers, and they and we walked on together, and hoped we had escaped all danger. And then all on a sudden this malignant on horseback espied us and came riding towards us with a drawn sword in his hand, and we, like lost sheep without a shepherd, kept together and thought to save ourselves by running. Had we scattered from one another, he had got but one of us."

"Master David was on horseback, I think?" I cried. "He could have ridden away and left you, and escaped?"

"Aye, he could," admitted Lister. His nostrils twitched, and suddenly his pretended complacence fell from him, and he wept. "Aye, he could have left us and saved himself, poor lad," he wailed. "But he never thought of it. You know well, Mistress, that David would never think of it. We all got into a field, and the Royalist crossed the field and came to us, and I being running by the hedge side, espied a thick holly tree, and I crept into it and pulled the boughs about me, and presently I heard David crying out to the horseman for——"

"You heard him crying out for quarter?" I said hardly.

Lister bowed his head. "Aye," he whispered.

There was a pause. O David, David, I thought; my little brother, my noble scholar lad. In prison! Will it be dark and

damp and full of fever? Will there be rough and tyrannous men, bullying and shouting, and I not there to comfort you? But they will not destroy David's dignity, I thought. At this his fine austere face rose before me, and anger and pity raged again in my heart.

"So one Royalist took four prisoners?" I said aloud scornfully.

"Aye—I've often thought since, we might easily have made him our prisoner, had we but had courage," mourned Lister. "But alas, we had none. For their hands shall be feeble, and their knees as weak as water."

"So it seems," said I. "He did not see you in the holly bush?"

"He asked for me; he said: 'There were four of you, where's the other?'" wailed Lister. "The other two had their backs to me, they did not see me, but Mester David looked right at me, and then turned away, and said he saw me not. It was like David, was that; aye, it was like him."

"I am greatly indebted to you, Joseph Lister," I said very smoothly, "for taking such excellent care of my brother David."

"What more could I ha' done?" said Lister, weeping. "If I'd come out o' t' bush, I should have been taken too. And then I couldn't have seen Mester John, and brought the gold for you and the childer. The Lord judge betwixt you and me, Mistress; vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

"The Lord will judge indeed," said I. "Well, go on, tell me—how does your master? Have you got him into prison too?"

"Thou hast loved to speak all words that may do hurt," faltered Lister. "You are cruel, Mistress. I love David as well as you do; I have always loved him."

Bitter reproaches rose to my lips, and then I thought: I have heard those words Lister says, very recently, and I remembered I had used them myself to the Earl of Newcastle. I sighed very wearily, and said: "Well, let it pass.

Perchance it was not your fault. Tell me of your master. How does he look after so many tribulations?"

But Lister found little to say on this point, so that it seemed John must have appeared much as usual; and this was so like John that I thought it very probable. He had not said a word to Lister about his charge through the Royalist leaguer, or his ride through the dawn across Haworth moors, though to hear Lister's account of his own journey to Colne and back, one would think it a perilous road indeed. Instead of the tale of John's dangers, I heard Lister's adventures in Bradford on his return—the streets, he said, were full of meal and chaff and feathers, which I could well believe, and screaming women, which I could believe well enough also. He had hid in a cellar last night, there being companies of Royalists marching about the streets.

"Were many Bradford citizens killed in the sack?" I asked quickly.

"Very few," said Lister. "Some dashing fellows wounded a few persons that resisted them taking their goods, and of those some have since died, but I think not more than half a score. The Earl of Newcastle ordered that quarter should be given to all the townsmen, so there was no great slaughter, nor is there like to be."

"I am glad," said I.

"God tied their hands and saved our lives," said Lister sanctimoniously. "He gave us a special blessing."

I daresay I smiled a little, though sadly, for I thought I had been the instrument of the Lord in that tying of hands, and perhaps Lister saw the smile and was vexed, for he went on angrily:

"It was a vision sent from God, an apparition."

"What?" said I, startled.

"Something came to the Earl on Lord's Day night, and pulled the clothes off his bed, and cried out several times with a lamentable voice: 'Pity poor Bradford!'" said Lister with unction. "Not till he gave orders about the quarter, did the apparition vanish away."

"Where heard you that tale?" I asked him in derision.

"It is the general report in Bradford—I assert it not as a certain truth, but it is the general report," said Lister in a huff. "'Pity poor Bradford,' said the apparition."

"Were there any friends of ours slain in the sack?" I asked, to divert him from this awkward topic. "What is the news of those who went with Sir Thomas?"

He told me that Mr. Atkinson was dead, of fright and anger when the Royalists sacked his house, and Isaac Baume lay sick at home, having been sorely wounded in the siege. Sir Thomas had got safe to Hull, it was said, with a broken wrist and some other wounds, escaping very narrowly, and his little daughter was safe with him, but the foot company which tried to break through the leaguer on Sunday night had been taken, almost every man. Mr. Hodgson was among these, he had been seen marching stripped to his shirt, with his hands tied. Many women had left Bradford before the sack and sought shelter in Halifax, others had hidden in their own cellars, but now the fair was set up near Bolling Hall, folk were creeping out and buying back their goods.

"What fair?" said I.

"The malignants have emptied the town of all that was worth carrying away," began Lister. "The enemy said: I will divide the spoil."

"You do not need to tell me that," said I, looking about me.

"And now they keep a fair and sell the things," said Lister. "The people, such as can find the price or borrow it, are buying back their own goods."

He seemed to find this quite an equitable arrangement, but I burned with anger at the injustice of it. However, I thought, we can buy a cow and some hens with this gold John has sent me, and so eke out subsistence.

"Dare you go to the camp to buy for us?" I asked doubtfully, for, thought I, since David values Lister's life, who am I to throw it away. "You say the slaughter is over; dare you venture to Bolling Hall?"

Lister hesitated. "Go make atonement for thyself," he murmured at length. "I will go if Mester John commands it."

"But John is at Colne," I said.

"I will go ask him," said Lister, strengthened in his obstinacy by my objection. "I will go tell him all that is done at Bradford and The Breck, and ask his counsel."

"Well, move the table from the door before you go," said I, exasperated.

It was two days before he returned, but when he appeared at last he was driving one of our own cows before him. The children rushed out and threw themselves on the beast's warm brown neck, and I must say I have never been so glad to see a cow, before or since, for as a rule cows seem to me somewhat dull and tepid animals. Lister brought messages from John: we were to mow the grass, he said, and get in the hay, and buy a cow and some fowl, and make shift for ourselves as best we could. For his part, since there was a Royalist garrison in Bradford now, and like to stay there, it was not safe for him to return to Bradford; so he was determined to remove to Manchester and join the Parliament forces there, or if he could find out Sir Thomas Fairfax, he would fall in with him and join his army.

"And was that all he said?" I asked.

"That was all," said Lister, producing a small fowl from within his doublet—the most of the poultry stolen by the soldiers, he said, had been killed, partly to save the expense of feeding them, partly to supply the officers' table, so this was the only living one he could find. The soldiers were so eager in selling to the Bradford townsfolk, he went on, that they had forgotten all their notions of slaughtering.

"And was that all Mr. Thorpe said?" I persisted, for Lister had given no message of love from John for me or the children, no expression, even, of concern for our welfare.

"That was all," said Lister, shutting his mouth obstinately. "The good man darkeneth not counsel by many words."

It was the forenoon, and the cow had been milked

before she left the camp, so we must wait some hours for the drink of milk the hungry children longed for; I hated to put them to work when their little stomachs were so empty, but since John said the hay was ripe we must set ourselves to getting it. Lister, grumbling bitterly that he was a weaver and dealt in yarn not grass, nevertheless went to the laithe for a scythe. But there was no scythe left, there was not a tool about the place. Dumbfounded, he came to me for instructions; I sent him off to all our neighbours in Little Holroyd, to borrow one. While he was away I went within to stir together a little thin porridge, from which dejecting occupation I was roused by a shout from Sam. I ran out, to find the little lad clinging round the cow's neck, while one Royalist soldier tried to drag him off, and another led the cow away by a halter.

"We bought her at your camp this morning," Thomas was crying, plucking at the sleeve, first of one soldier and then of the other. "Don't you understand—we bought her!"

"Get off now—get off!" said the soldiers, lunging at him. "Call your children off, missis, or it'll be t'worse for 'em."

"This is our cow twice over," I explained, panting to keep pace with them. "She was taken from us on Monday—we bought her at Bolling Hall this morning."

"You can buy her again now, if it suits you, missis," said the soldier with the halter, stopping. "What'll you pay for her, eh? A fine healthy cow, in good milk," he added with a grin.

I hesitated, then despairingly named a price.

"Aw!" jeered the soldier in derision: "We can get more nor that for her at camp. Come on," he said to the other, jerking at the halter.

His companion picked Sam off the cow and threw him sprawling, and they went off dragging the beast down the lane.

There are few things bitterer in life, I think—and I have seen much grief—than injustice. If injustice is to be allowed, we feel, everything is hopeless, for nothing can be

certain; we seem like helpless birds beating against ever-changing, ever-narrowing, ever-hardening bars. I could scarcely keep my eyes dry and my voice steady as I helped Sam up, and gave the boys each a hand, and led them back to the house. Thomas's face was puckered and his eyes perplexed—poor child, it was his first encounter with injustice, and he could not credit it—but Sam's was crimson with anger and very sullen. We were hardly within before Lister came back to us, looking very bewildered and down-cast; he had been quite unable to borrow a scythe, he said, for most had had their tools stolen, and if any had managed to hide them or buy them back, they were as precious as gold to them. Mr. Baume was very sick and like to die, he added; he only escaped being made prisoner by hiding in his own lead-house, and the colour on the walls and floor was not healthful for him. There was not a cow left, he said, in all Little Holroyd. He spoke this last complacently, thinking we still had ours; when he heard our news his long face dropped still longer.

"The days of affliction have taken hold upon me," he quoted mournfully: "My welfare passeth away as a cloud."

"Lister!" I protested. "Be not so uncheerful, pray!"

But I spoke with quivering lips, for a kind of horror had taken hold of me; if misfortune so continually pursues me, I thought, I fear I shall not be able to support it; my spirit will break, my courage will leave me; and what will happen to the children then?

"Take what money we have in your hand," I bade Lister in a harsh loud tone: "And go to the camp and buy another cow."

This I said merely to cheer myself by taking some action, even if it were not the wisest action to take; but all the three pairs of eyes which were fixed on me brightened as I spoke, and so I took some heart again. I roused myself and made them eat, and then bade Lister dispatch; and then I set the boys to gathering wood, and then had them reading to me from the Bible, and spelling and ciphering, and so the day passed.

About twilight, Lister came very quietly in from the lane, leading a cow, and put her in the laithe, and we all went out eagerly to look at her. She was not one of our own, but a thin scrawny beast with a flat bag, such as John would never have admitted within The Breck in our prosperous days, but these were not prosperous days and we were very glad of her. Lister had brought some cooking pans and spoons, too, and a rough buffet, a poor thing but strong, and a coverlet, so we were not totally without furnishings, and felt less helpless.

In the morning we had milk and an egg, and were cheerful, and Sam led the cow, Dolly we called her, down the slope to the beck, where she would be out of sight from the lane. But the grass was rough down there, and the beast from her natural instinct continually strayed up the bank to the better pasture, where she came into view, so that Sam was continually chasing her down again; and sure enough about noon when we were just sitting down to sup our porridge a Royalist in a scarlet coat suddenly thrust his head in at the back door and called out:

"Hi, missis! Where'st 'a hidden cow?"

Such a passion of anger seized me then that the blood left my face, and I clenched my hands and advanced on him, which seeing that he had a musket slung across his back would only have brought death down on us, when Sam prevented me:

"She isn't our cow," he called out cheerfully, swinging one foot: "Take her if you like."

"Who does she belong, then?" asked the Royalist, cautious.

"Mr. Ferrand of Holroyd Hall," said Sam.

The Royalist's face fell. "Oh, the Captain's father," he said in a disappointed tone. "Well—I'd best leave her, then."

"Take her or leave her, it's nowt to do wi' us," said Sam. "If you take her you'll save me driving her off our land, and I'm fair sick of it."

"You're a young besom, that's what you are," said the Royalist. "And who's yon?" he cried out suspiciously, as

Lister, who had been up in the loom-chamber seeing if aught could be made of an unfinished piece there, came into view. "Is that your father, eh? Is that John Thorpe?"

"He's my brother's man from Adel," I found the wit to tell him quickly.

The Royalist, disappointed, withdrew.

"We'd best keep the cow on the Hall land, I reckon," said Lister, who was somewhat pale from this encounter, "and if we can break in, put her in their laithe at night."

"We might borrow their scythe, too," suggested Sam eagerly.

All this we did, and so through the days that followed we kept the cow and got in the hay, Lister using the scythe and the boys and I gathering and shocking it after him. Sam was jubilant over his trick with the cow, and worked well at the hay and soon forgot better times and was happy in the present business, but Thomas stayed very quiet and mournful, and I knew what ailed him. He had heard his mother and his brother lie, and to his sweet and sensitive soul that was truly dreadful. It is not only that we have lost our substance, that we are half-starved and John is in danger of his life, I thought as I toiled along the field in the summer heat; the children have known fear and injustice and lies in their young time, their spirits are being compressed into ugly moulds, God grant they may not take lasting shape from them.

But meanwhile, all we could do for the children was to strive to keep them fed. We got in the hay and exchanged some of it for some fowls and a goose or two, and then the oats luckily ripened early, and we got them in as well. It was killing work for one in my condition—my body ached continually, my beauty quite went from me, threads of grey came in my hair—but if only we could keep ourselves alive on stuff from our own land, I did not care. For the rents due to us on property John owned in and about Bradford, it was quite impossible to collect them; Lister tried but gave it up, for the whole neighbourhood, save the few Royalist supporters, was beaten to the earth, totally impover-

ished by the Royalist sack. But if we could live on our eggs and milk and meal, and if Lister could perhaps weave a little as well, we should not do so badly.

Just as hope began thus to raise its head, however, another blow fell to crush it.

One evening as I turned to go upstairs to bed—for we had laid in a few scanty necessaries for the house with the hay money, and I had a mattress now I called a bed, a thin poor thing but better than the floor—just as I came to the foot of the stairs, Lister planted himself before me.

"The oats and the hay are in now, mistress," he croaked.

"Yes, God be praised," said I, sighing.

"So now I can leave you," went on Lister.

"Leave me!" I cried, aghast. "What mean you, Lister?"

"Mester John said he would not bind me to stay with you after harvest, I could leave you if I so desired, when the oats and hay were in and you were provided for the winter," said Lister in a tone of angry wailing.

My heart sank. "Why do you wish to leave The Breck?" I asked him quietly. "After so many years of service?"

"You cannot bear the sight of me, Mistress," wailed Lister. "And I cannot bear to see——"

He left his sentence unfinished, but I knew very well what it was Lister feared to see.

"Well, we will speak of it again in the morning, Lister," I said.

"The time of my departure is at hand," muttered Lister.

"We will speak of it in the morning," I repeated wearily.

But by morning he was gone. He had stolen away in the night without a word.

So then I was indeed alone. My sin has found me out, I thought, and a despair swept over me.

A WINTER PASSES

IT WAS ABOUT a week after Lister had gone, in the forenoon while I was putting wood on the fire, that I felt the first pangs of my labour with that child which Lister had dreaded to see.

I set water on to boil, then dragged myself upstairs to set what I could in order, for I had made one or two scanty preparations for my lying-in. But for the child I had made no preparations, for in my secret heart I was sure it would not live. After all the anguish, the misery, the toiling and moiling I had gone through during the months I was carrying, I could not but dread lest the fruit of my womb should be deformed or imbecile, and so, God forgive me, I had set my mind on a still-birth. Better for the child that it should die, I thought, rather than live to be a bastard; and better for John, and better for the other children. As I trailed about the room, Thomas came in; he always knew when any about him were suffering, and he had followed me up from the kitchen, and now fixed his brown eyes, very loving and anxious, upon me questioningly. I smiled at him and smoothed his hair, and sent him running for the midwife. When he had gone, I reflected on the love and care and tenderness which had been about me when I was brought to bed with Thomas, and what there was about me now, and my heart failed me, and I paced the room despairingly.

As it chanced, the midwife was some time in coming, but I did not trouble myself over the delay, for I had made it up in my mind that I should have a very long and painful labour. When at last she came and laid her hands on me, she exclaimed and said the birth was near at hand; but I did not believe her, I did not believe that any such good

"I will weave it, on your looms, and we will share the price," offered Baume gruffly.

"But who will buy?" I asked in doubt.

"The Royalists," said Baume. "Every fresh man they enlist needs a scarlet coat."

"I do not wish to clothe the King's men," said I stiffly.

"Why not?" said Baume. "If they pay an honest price? Take t'money from the Earl of Newcastle wi' one hand, and pass it on to Black Tom wi' t'other. We'll sell t'cloth to merchants in the white—let them dye it scarlet if they've a mind. What do you say, Mrs. Thorpe?"

"I will write to my brother," I said, for indeed my heart leaped at the prospect of money coming to The Breck again to buy food and clothes and comfort for the children: "If you will pay for the letter to go by the carrier—and," I added on an impulse, "if you will teach my Sam your trade."

"He's young yet, missis," grumbled Baume.

"He's well grown for his age, and very shrewd," I countered. "Sam!" I called, for he was in the laithc. "Here, Sam!"

Sam came trotting up, steadily and without fuss, like his father.

"Dost want to be a weaver, lad?" shouted Isaac Baume.

"Yes," said Sam shortly.

He made no further observations, but stood looking at Baume as if awaiting orders to begin.

"He knows his mind, any road," said Baume, smiling—I think perhaps for the first time since the siege. "Well—write the letter, Mrs. Thorpe, if it please you; I know you have some skill with the pen."

It was so long since I had heard of Will, and so much had happened in the meantime, that he seemed a stranger to me, and I had quite a difficulty in writing in sisterly fashion. I felt, too, some guilt that I had not told him of John's flight and David's imprisonment, but then, neither had he told us any of his news, I reflected.

Either my plain statement of our case, or Will's family duty, or both, had their effect, however; for a few days

after my letter went, Will came up to the door of The Breck on a stout grey nag, with Eliza riding pillion. Eliza looked so neat and smart, in a good strong brown cloak and high-crowned hat, that I hesitated to go out to her, for we were almost in rags. And when I did go out, the meeting was painful; Eliza was fussy and consequential, and seemed to think she had conferred an unheard-of favour in riding as far as her brother's house, while Will wore a very solemn glum frown and had a way of poking his head forward, which with his pursed lips made him appear very pompous.

Eliza exclaimed in horror at the empty interior of The Breck; she kept asking for articles of furniture or tableware which had been there in her childhood, and though I explained many times to her that the house had been sacked, she seemed to regard their absence as somehow my fault, as if I had secretly sold them. Will, too, began a long tale of their troubles at Adel which I could scarce listen to patiently, since their greatest distress concerned an officer billeted on them and the rudeness of Dr. Hitch, who was making difficulties with Will about the new services. It seemed that Parliament had made a solemn league and covenant with the Scots, and established Presbyterianism in England, and forbidden the use of the Prayer-Book, and commanded in its place another form of services, called the Directory. I had heard nothing of all this, for I had no money for diurnals and no time for gossip, and to hear them talking of it, when my children were starving and ragged and the Parliament's forces beaten and John in hiding, amazed me; I could hardly credit it. I seemed to have forgotten the right words to use in such discussions. But as time passed, I began to see that all this talk, that was in reality a mere pretence to his uneasiness; I saw Will glance at me passionately, and Eliza's lip quivered for her brother's children. Then it came out that John's, in these troubled times could do nothing. Dr. Hitch would not change from the old threatening to discharge Will, who was

to the Directory, and had not paid him for months, so that Will and Eliza were living on their savings—the horse they had come on was hired and the hire was a great matter to them, which was why they had not come before; their state only seemed good compared with ours.

“Nevertheless, Penninah,” said Will gravely: “You shall have the loan.”

I now looked at them more carefully, and saw that Eliza’s swarthy face was pinched and chilled, and her dark hair threaded with grey, like mine; while Will’s brown too was plentifully sprinkled with grey, and his poking head and pursed lips were really marks of long-continued perplexity. I showed them Christopher, not without an inward tremor but it had to be done; Will, poking his head forward and nodding very portentously, said he was like our father, while Eliza asked if John had heard of the birth of the child. I told her I knew not where John was. I daresay my voice expressed some of the trouble I felt, for Eliza laid her hand on my arm, and said:

“But you are rich in your children, Penninah.”

Then I reminded myself that Will and Eliza had had no children since that first ailing little girl who died, and I thought, yes I am blessed in my children, and a warm rush of feeling filled my heart, and I felt strong and able to fend for all three. I began quickly to talk to Eliza of John, thinking that to hear of her brother would cheer her as to hear of mine cheered me. It was a moving story, I found, that I had to tell, and they listened with gaping mouth and wide eyes; I spoke of the sieges of Bradford, the death of Francis, the battle of Adwalton, the retreat of Sir Thomas and the Royalists’ sack of the town. Will seemed very sorry to hear about Francis; he wagged his head and said in his solemn ministerial tones:

“He was ever a scapegrace and ignorant of the ways of God, but there was much natural grace in him.”

Then I spoke of David, and Will’s face clouded; he said he would make enquiries in the Royalist prisons, of which there were plenty in Leeds.

They had brought the gold I asked for, and Will laid it very solemnly in my hands, and said he and Eliza gave it me in trust for Mr. Thorpe's grandchildren. It was just a manner of speech, but I shrank from it all the same, sending a quick protective thought to my little Christopher. I asked Will to say a prayer over the child, and for all of us, before he left, and this he did; his invocation was somewhat long and ponderous, so that Sam fidgeted, but still it had a dignity and sincerity, and I was glad of it.

Thomas and Sam were a trifle subdued in the presence of their aunt and uncle, and we were all very merry together when Will and Eliza had gone. But for all that, their visit had been an immense relief, a lightening of my burden; it was as if they had opened a window in a gloomy and narrow house, so that I could see, no longer only my own troubles, but a distant open view. I had felt a mere starved defeated drudge, as well as a miserable sinner; now I remembered that I was Penninah Clarkson, and that though Bradford might be sacked, the cause of freedom was not lost.

Indeed—from the moment of my little Chris's birth, as I liked to think—the cause, as well as my own affairs, had taken a turn. Lord Fairfax and Sir Thomas having got into Hull, that being the only place in the county safe for them, the Royalists laid siege to it; but the inhabitants opened the river sluices and, the land round the estuary there being very flat, flooded the countryside. The chances of this mortal life are very strange; for because he was beaten at Bradford and had to go to Hull, and because the leaguer of the Royalists, and the flooding of the country, made fodder in Hull very scarce, Sir Thomas took ship with some horse across the Humber and went to fight with the men of the Eastern Counties in Lincolnshire, and there he fought at the side of Oliver Cromwell, and once those two men met, the cause of the Parliament took such a turn, in the military way, that it never looked back again.

I had no money for diurnals at that time, so I did not know these things fully, but now that Isaac Baume and I were in a sense partners, I heard more news. For we carried

out his plan just as he made it; we bought wool, and his children (who were both girls) and mine combed it, and Mrs. Baume and I saw to the spinning, and Isaac Baume wove it into cloth and took it to market, and came back with money and gossip. As we had no horse or donkey, he was obliged to carry the piece on his shoulder, and this for a wounded man with a lame leg was hard. But he managed to do it, he being a man somewhat despondent in speech but very stubborn in act, and he took Sam both to market and into the loom-chamber with him and taught him, and the child learned fast. There was little or no schooling going on in Bradford at present, Mr. Worrall having gone off to fight and the school revenues being all at sixes and sevens, so I let Sam leave his book and learn the cloth trade. But I taught Thomas myself, for I remembered what David had said about shielding the lamp of learning that it might be ready to shine out on a better day. When we had sold a piece or two and I had some precious silver coins as my share of what was above the price of the next lot of wool, I bought back some of David's books in the public market for a few pence, and when it was noised abroad what I was after, some of the garrison soldiers came one by one sheepishly up the lane and offered me our own books, tattered and dirty, for the price of a glass of ale. Thomas and I made merry over the gaps in the books caused by the missing pages; I remember in the Latin Accidence the page containing neuter nouns of the third declension was torn in half, and for a long time we were in great perplexity as to how to make their cases. But Thomas kept a record of all such nouns that he found in his reading book, and presently made out the whole declension thus, writing it down in a fair neat hand, and we were proud of it.

Thomas, too, kept the accounts for the wool and the cloth, for he was good at figuring, like his father. We could not, however, give the oats and hay into his charge, for when someone came begging with a piteous tale, his eyes grew very large and sad and his mouth quivered and before we knew what was happening he gave our precious oats away

for nothing. I could not scold him, for indeed I wished to do the same and steeled my heart with great difficulty, but we could not be over-generous if we were to live at all, so I put Sam to the task instead. Sam, although such a child, had a cheerful business-like manner which somehow sorted out the truly destitute from those who were trying to cozen; he reminded me very much of his grandfather Thorpe at these times, and also when I saw him so earnestly and carefully balancing the scales.

It was a hard, cold winter; and a hard, toilsome life. I did all the work of the house, keeping it clean—and when two healthy boys and a baby dwell in a house this is not inconsiderable; and I did the cooking, not that we had much to cook, and I patched and turned the boys' clothes and my own and knitted their stockings. At first I sat hours at the spinning-wheel, too, for we could not afford to pay for others doing the work, but as soon as we rose out of absolute penury, I put this out to be done by Sarah, who was glad enough to earn. There were the hens to feed, and the cow to milk, and the wood to chop; the boys and I shared these tasks, and very gallantly they played their part. There was my little Christopher to tend and nourish. There was Thomas to teach—and, what was pleasant but a little disconcerting, he learned so fast that I was hard put to it to keep ahead of him; I often sat up late at night, my eyes dropping with sleep—the fire out to save wood, the wind howling about the house, the cold rain beating on the windows—learning from the book enough to impart to my eldest son next day.

Yes, it was a hard, toilsome life; but it brought me one great boon, namely that I had no time to feel or think. Sometimes when the wintry dusk was falling, I had a moment of idleness because I could no longer see to work yet it was wasteful to light the candle, and then I stood open the door and wrapped a shawl round me and looked out, my hair blowing in the wind; and watching the rain driving in wild gusts across the hills, and listening to the wind's stormy roar, I fell into a melancholy mood, and thought of the tragic

happenings of my life, of my father and Francis cold in Bradford graveyard, of David rotting in some fever-stricken gaol, of John—ah, where was John? In flight across the moors, or fighting in some desperate ambush? How was he living? How was he feeling? What were his thoughts of me? Had he died, perhaps, unreconciled? Whenever I reached this point of my meditations a deep sigh escaped my lips, and I bowed my head, and I should doubtless have wept, tormenting myself, but there came always an imperious cry from Christopher, or Sam rushed in, wet and hungry, from market, or Thomas gently put in my hand an exercise he had written, and so my laments had to wait till I had performed my duties, and so I never came round to them at all.

Yes, it was a long hard winter and a long hard life—every day seemed as long as a year in what I did, yet far too short for all I had to do. But every week we made one piece of white cloth, and every week we sold it and bought more wool—when I thought of what a small thing one piece seemed to Mr. Thorpe and John and even to my father, and what a great thing it was to us, I smiled sadly; but what of that? The one piece sold, and I hoarded my share of the price so that when the time came I could have the oats field ploughed and planted, and we should have meal for the next winter again. The boys and I toiled day and night, and we looked like beggars from a poor-house rather than Thorpes of Little Holroyd, but what of that? I kept them to their manners and made Thomas read to us from the Holy Book morning and night, so their minds were not unfurnished nor were their spirits impoverished. Yes, it was a long hard winter and a hard toilsome life—but we lived, and the winter passed.

“GOD MADE THEM AS STUBBLE”

AND AS IT was with us, so it was with the cause and the men who served it. They had a long hard winter, full of hunger, cold, misery, defeat; but, simply by their going on and not giving up, by their not being disheartened, the winter passed, and the cause lived.

Well do I remember the snowy day in January when Isaac Baume, standing talking to me outside our door with our cloth over his shoulder, waiting to set off to market, told me the first piece of stirring news. Sir Thomas, he said, had been appointed by the Parliament to cross over into Lancashire and Cheshire with what force he had, to meet a great Royalist army, mostly from Ireland, which had gathered there. Not being able to get over the Pennine hills by the usual West Riding road, which was barred to him by the Royalist garrisons, he had gone round through Derbyshire—though God knew how he had managed it in this weather, said Baume, for the mountains were much higher in those parts—and had got into Manchester, and all the Parliament men who could, were gathering to him.

“They say Hodgson, who has been in hiding up Skipton way since he got exchanged, has collected a troop and slipped across to him,” said Baume.

“John will be with them!” I exclaimed.

“Very like,” agreed Baume, nodding.

It was a very crisp cold day and he was much wrapped up, there was a drop of rheum at the end of his nose and his hand on his stick was red and swollen with frost, so that he did not appear a very heroic figure, but I thought I heard a wistfulness, a note of longing, in his tone.

“You wish you were there too?” I said.

Baume struck the ground with his stick and turned aside, not wishing to reveal his feelings by answering. But he did not go away, though Sam was skipping about in the snow, ready to start, so I waited, and after a moment Baume turned back to me.

"'Tis said that Black Tom wept when he looked on 'em," he muttered.

"Looked on whom?" I asked him, puzzled.

"Our Yorkshire lads. They were so sick and naked and haggard," said Baume gruffly.

I exclaimed in grief and pity. After a moment: "Mr. Baume, let us send them our next picce of cloth," I said.

"Why, that would be very difficult, d'you sec, Mrs. Thorpe," grumbled Baume, though from the tone of his voice I knew this was what he had been aiming at all along. "Nay, I reckon it couldn't be done. How should we get t'cloth to Black Tom? Over t'mountains, and right to Manchester! I don't sec as it could be done."

"By carrier from Halifax," I suggested.

"Aye? And how if the Royalists there find out it's for Black Tom?" objected Baume. "Where would picce go then, ch?"

"You can send the cloth in care of John Thorpe," I said. "Royalists away from Bradford won't know his name."

"It might never get to him," said Baume.

"But it might," said I.

"What would be t'use of twenty or thirty yards of cloth among all them men?" objected Baume again.

"Thirty yards more use than none," said I. As he stumped off, grumbling, I called after him: "I will send a letter to my husband with the cloth."

"Look sharp and get it written, then," Baume threw over his shoulder crossly. "Women! Letters! I reckon we'll send one picce for nowt, and one to sell."

So I wrote to John. I scarcely knew how to address him, for I felt he would not wish endearments from me; so I began simply: *Husband*, and wrote a plain bare account of what had happened at The Breck. Christopher was born on

September 18, I told him baldly; The Breck was sacked but none of us hurt; David is a prisoner; Lister got in the hay and oats and then left us and I know not where he is; Will and Eliza have lent Isaac Baume and myself money and we are making one piece of cloth a week; at first it was hard but now we shall do well enough; Sam, if it please God, will be a clothier, and Thomas a scholar, and they send you their dear love; one piece that comes herewith is a gift to the Parliament, the other, if it may be, is for sale. *That God be merciful to you and bless you, and direct you in all your ways, and give you the victory over all your enemies, is the prayer of your wife Penninah Thorpe*, I wrote, and so concluded, save that I put below: *Remember our humble service to Sir Thomas Fairfax*. The letter was tied and sealed, and put in the pack with one of the pieces, and as soon as they were ready they were sent off by carrier from Halifax.

For a fortnight I was strangely happy; I sang about the house, and when I chanced to see my face in the little mirror which Sam had brought me, I saw my lips had colour again and my eyes were bright. I dressed my hair more carefully, and once again rejoiced in its thickness and length instead of feeling them a trouble; I pricked my ears whenever a footstep of man or beast could be heard in the lane. All this, though I did not own it to myself, was because I hoped for a letter from John. But none came. My hope died gradually; after a month I heard myself one day scolding crossly at the children, and caught myself up, ashamed, and then I knew why I was so cross, and put aside my hope and my scolding together, and told myself my hope was vain. It was a sad and stern admission, a bitter thing to face, that my husband was either dead or would not write to me, for that the packs had gone astray I somehow could not believe. To my own disappointment was added the vexation of Isaac Baume, who grumbled and scolded so bitterly and continually about the cloth, which indeed we could ill spare, that one day I broke out at him, and in a strange harsh voice cried loudly:

"You have lost your cloth, but I have lost my husband!"

At this he took my hand quickly and pressed it, turning away so as not to meet my eyes, and he sniffed and pressed my hand again and dropped it and walked away; and after that I heard no more of the lost cloth.

And then all of a sudden good news began to come so thick and fast we could scarce keep pace with it—or at least it seems so to me now; perhaps the reality was more dreary. First I heard from Will that the Parliament had ordered some commission or other to reform the University of Cambridge; so that if only David could get free, he would be able to resume his studies there. No one in Leeds knew where David was, Will added, though he had enquired diligently—which damped my spirits; but there were rumours that David with another gentleman of a scholarly turn had been taken to Selby—which slightly raised them. Then we heard, both by gossip and in print, that Sir Thomas and the other Parliamentary commanders from Lancashire had beaten the Royalist army in Cheshire totally; by the mercy of God a thaw had come in the night, with heavy pouring rain, and the river there had swollen with the melted snow and cut off parts of the Royalist army from mutual assistance, and Sir Thomas, caring nothing for the weather or anything else but the business in hand, though the battle started badly for our men, finished it well. It was after this battle, so I have heard, that the wicked man who later became General Monk, that abomination of desolation, changed sides; from being a Royalist he turned Parliamentary—what disservice he did our cause later, alas that I should have to remember. But in those days all this was in the womb of time, and we rejoiced greatly at this victory, which cleared all Lancashire of Royalists. And then one day Isaac Baume came whooping up the lane, waving a diurnal over his head; the Scots, he said, had crossed the Tweed to our assistance, and the Earl of Newcastle had perforce marched north with the main part of his army, to meet them. Sure enough, the very next day there was drumming and mustering in Bradford, and some of the soldiers marched off to go north to accompany the Earl,

thus lessening the garrison considerably. From that it seemed but a moment to the next good news—though when I consider the matter, I think it must have been about a month, for when Baume brought the diurnal about the Scots it was a raw February day, with half-melted snow on the ground and a dank mist in the air; and when Sam came rushing with the name of Mr. Hodgson it was a wild spring day, March I expect, with a wind very strong and gusty, and showers of hail sometimes, but a blue and white sky behind when they had passed, very bright and cheerful.

"Oh, Mother, oh, Mother!" cried my Sam, rushing straight up to me and burying his face against my waist. "Mr. Hodgson! Oh, Mother!"

"What is it, love, what is it?" I said—I tried to keep my voice quiet for the child's sake, but my heart beat fast at once, dreading bad news.

"I've seen Mr. Hodgson in Halifax!" cried Sam, drawing back his head and shouting loudly up at me. "He's an Ensign now. Some Parliament men are there—they've come over the hills—the garrison has run away—the Bradford garrison will run too, he hopes—my father is safe, he says, and with Sir Thomas Fairfax."

"Well, God be praised!" I said, and my knees trembled so that I sank to a chair. "But can it be true?" I doubted.

"It's true, never fear," cried Sam. "I always knew, I always *knew*, Mother!" he stammered, his voice loud with excitement and his face very pale: "I always *knew* Sir Thomas would gain the victory in the end. How could you doubt it? Why, even Chris knows better than that! Don't you, Chris love?" he said fondly, bending over the child and shaking his rattle which Mrs. Baume had brought him, so that Chris smiled and kicked and gurgled and Sam was pleased.

"We are not at the end yet, Sam," I warned him.

"You'll see the Royalists out of Bradford to-morrow, choose how," contended Sam stubbornly.

To my amazement he proved right. Next day early in the morning we heard the drums down in Bradford beating to

summon the men, and a great sound of orderly shouting and marching; and then, not an hour later, from the hills behind us Halifax way, there came very faintly the same kind of orderly tramping noise, so that we paused and looked at each other. I had just taken a bite and sup to Isaac Baume in the loom-chamber, and suddenly as I stood there with the basin in my hands we heard distant singing, and the tune was that of a psalm. Then I cried out and sprang for the door, dropping the basin, and Baume and Sam sprang after me, and Thomas downstairs already had the porch door open, and we all ran out, just as we were, right across the field and the beck and the Holroyd Hall land until we came to Great Holroyd. All the villagers were out and watching, and I noticed how they too, like us, looked pale. And then—God be praised that I saw that day!—over the brow of the hill, down Great Holroyd Lane, came the men in buff-coats, marching, ranks and ranks of them, both on foot and mounted, and as they marched they sang the sixty-eighth psalm in verse. We sang too, and waved and shouted, and some of us wept, and some fell on their knees and prayed. At the head of our soldiers rode a man I had never seen before, a handsome ginger-haired fellow with a fiery pointed face, Colonel Lambert from Malham way the people said he was, a great leader of horse, whom Sir Thomas thought very well of. Mr. Hodgson came not far behind, smiling hugely. When I saw him I could restrain myself no longer; I ran out of the crowd, so that all the people looked at me, and planted myself before him and cried out: "Is my husband safe?"

"Aye, safe, safe!" cried Hodgson, beaming. "Safe as yet."

This last was a little ominous when I came to consider it, but at the time I felt only a rush of thankfulness.

Before we reached home we heard the sounds of musketry and drums from Bradford, and knew the battle had been joined. At least, we in Little Holroyd thought of it as a battle, but I noticed that Captain Hodgson, as he soon became, though he did not correct me openly, spoke of it later as a skirmish, which I suppose is a much lesser matter.

The Royalist horse engaged our men pretty closely, Captain Hodgson said, but our foot gave them such a salute with shot, as made them run. So there we were, free of the Royalist garrison, with our friends about us once again; with what feelings of relief and thankfulness we went to bed that night, I can remember now.

Captain Hodgson most kindly came in to see us next day, on his way home to Coley for a few days' rest, and he was able to set my mind at ease about my husband. John, he said, was close about Sir Thomas's person, and very well esteemed; men called him Sir Thomas's steward, and indeed he kept all the general's accounts, public and private, gave receipts to Parliament for great sums, and disbursed the soldiers' pay—when there was any to disburse, added Captain Hodgson, laughing. If Thomas and I were pleased about this promotion for John, Sam was in an ecstasy; he went outside and turned somersaults over and over upon the grass, alone.

Again it seems as if but a moment passed between the freeing of Bradford and the thanksgiving ordered by the Parliament for Sir Thomas's victory at Selby, but again it must have been a month at least, for Chris, I remember, was then cutting his teeth. Sir Thomas had orders from the Parliament to get over into Yorkshire and join his father's forces and march north to help the Scots, and unluckily the Royalists in York got wind of this, and marched to intercept him. He routed them so totally that the Earl of Newcastle was alarmed and turned away from the Scots and marched back into Yorkshire, and the Scots followed close on his heels, and they and Sir Thomas shut him up in York. Yes, it was really spring by then, and warm, with the buds on the trees and the lambs in the fields, for I remember that, with having had a poor night of it over Chris's teeth and the church being warm and sunny in the afternoon, I almost fell asleep during the thanksgiving sermon. But that did not mean a lack of thankfulness on my part; indeed in no place anywhere in England was the service celebrated with more true feeling for the glory of God and the excellent worth of

Sir Thomas, than in Bradford. It pleased us to regard the Parliament's order as a compliment to our county.

"They're beginning to take notice of our Tom up i' London," chuckled Isaac Baume, hobbling about from friend to friend. "Aye! They're beginning to see we've got a general i' Yorkshire."

And now upon an instant, as it seemed, three great Parliamentary armies were joined together, and drew a leaguer round York; there were the Scots under an Earl of theirs, there were the Fairfaxes with their Yorkshiremen, and there were the men from the Eastern counties—some Earl or other was supposed to command them too, but their true commander was Colonel Cromwell—for whose assistance Sir Thomas had been into Lincolnshire to ask. I own that, although I was only a woman and knew nothing of fighting, I felt uneasy when I heard of all these Earls, and Lord Fairfax, commanding our armies in such a great opportunity, for having seen Lord Fairfax and the Earl of Newcastle both, I had no great opinion of Earls and Lords as commanders. Such highborn folk are too much occupied with themselves and their own pretensions, I thought, to do well in an irksome and long-continued task; if only Black Tom and Colonel Cromwell—of whose exploits in the Eastern Counties the diurnals were always telling—had it in hand, or even Colonel Lambert, who had lately joined Sir Thomas's forces, we should go better to work. However, I comforted myself with the thought that the commanders on the other side were mostly Earls as well. Indeed the Royalists had a king and a prince to command them; I never heard that the King did much in the way of fighting, but his brother Prince Rupert was much talked of as very daring and fiery in cavalry charge. But for my part I always held my tongue when he was mentioned, and withheld my assent to the general awe; for I thought that a Stuart prince might be daring in a charge indeed, but would never be shrewd in managing a whole battle. How right I was in my guess, Marston Moor and Naseby proved very well.

It was while our three armies were thus besieging York

that a piece of news reached me which brought me to my knees in thankfulness, though there was a little bitterness mingled with it too. Our former maid came up to The Breck from the Pack Horse with a letter for me, which she said the carrier had left at their inn; *for my sister Penninah Thorpe at her house in Little Holroyd*, I read as she held it, and I cried out with joy and snatched it from her, for the superscription was writ in David's fine scholarly hand. A paper fell out as I unfolded the letter, which was dated from the leaguer before York. I scanned it with such joy, such eagerness! *Dear Sister*, I read:

Dear Sister, It will give you joy, I believe, to hear that the recent great action of Sir Thomas Fairfax at Selby hath set me free of my imprisonment, and since those ceremonies in Cambridge, the strict urging of which drove me thence, have now been reformed, both Sir Thomas and your husband are urgent with me to return to my books. They say there is much to be done in that University, in sustaining the faithful and preventing the ungodly, and that I shall serve God to more purpose with the pen than the sword. Indeed my service on the field was as little glorious as that of Horace, nor did Mercury deign to snatch me away from the enemy in a dense cloud as he did the poet, though indeed he provided Joseph Lister with a holly bush. I hope Lister came safe off. He is a worthy man, if on some points mistaken; I commend him to you.

I have delayed a few days here with the leaguer, for I was employed about a task better suited to my abilities than carrying a musket. A mine having been sprung untimely by the besiegers, a certain tower in York, which housed many old manuscripts, fell down, burying the manuscripts beneath its ruins. This much distressed Sir Thomas, whose zeal for all old writings you know, and he forthwith promised a reward to any soldier retrieving a paper from the stones. I and another gentleman, an antiquarian in Sir Thomas's employ, busied ourselves in gathering and ranging these documents, and encouraging the soldiers in their search. But now most are found, and I ride to-morrow to Cambridge, Sir Thomas with his customary generosity having promised to furnish

me with a horse. He hath forbidden the ordnance to aim at the Minster, of which I am truly glad, for it is a most fine and gracious building.

My brother John is well, though somewhat overwearied from much employment; he bids me remember his dear love to you and his sons. He thanks you and Isaac Baume for your timely gift of cloth, which, he says, kept several good men warm from the wind last winter; the inclosed paper pledges the public faith for the price of the other piece. God bless you, my dear sister. Pray for your affectionate brother,

David Clarkson.

I desire my love may be presented to the children.

When I had read this letter, I laughed with joy; and I held it close to my breast as if it were the writer, and kissed it, and held it out again and read it, with many other of those fond behaviours women use to a letter from one they love. I called out to the children, so that they came running, and told them joyfully:

"Your Uncle David is free, and gone to Cambridge!"

Thomas's face lighted up with a great joy, for he already wished to go to Cambridge University himself, and he exclaimed, and asked to hear the letter, and I gave it him and he read it, smiling very happily; but Sam's face fell. He preserved a decent appearance of content, and indeed was content enough of David's safety doubtless, but I saw he was disappointed. He hoped the letter came from his father, I thought; and I too felt some slight bitterness that it did not. I have had no single written word from John since he left us nigh a year ago, I thought; he intends not to write to me, he thinks me unworthy of a letter. This put a dark thread of pain through my gladness. Nevertheless, when I had given the girl a coin and she had left me, I went up to my room and knelt and praised God for His great mercies, from a very thankful heart. Now that David was free and Bradford was free and we were able to feed ourselves and live, I looked back on the days when it was not so, and wondered how I had endured.

I have often read accounts of battles, in books of history and in diurnals, and have wrestled to clothe the words with flesh and blood, trying to make clear to myself how the fighting really went and what men felt who took part in it. But for the most part I have wrestled in vain; this talk of troops and colours, of flanks and wings and rears and forlorns, of routs and stands and charges, is in truth a foreign tongue, only understandable by those who have the key, of military experience, to it. It was so with the battle of Marston Moor; after it was fought I read with the greatest eagerness—as surely all did who could read, in Yorkshire—all the accounts of it given in letters of intelligence and pamphlets, spending my precious pence without stint to learn more of this fight, so tremendous in its consequence to our whole country. But I could make little of it; nor have I ever been quite able to fit what I read into the pictures I have in my mind of the fighting. But those pictures are very clear and strong and I do not doubt them; for I have heard John and Captain Hodgson and Sir Thomas Fairfax from the one side, and Giles Ferrand from the other, tell of certain happenings on that bloody field so often, that I never can forget them.

The first thing that always comes into my mind when I think of Marston Moor is this—a very slight matter, but revealing. Whenever any man I know who was at Marston Moor speaks of that battle, his hand, as if remembering more quickly than his head, steals out to his drink, if any stand beside him. For in truth it was a very hot and thirsty business; it was summer, and warm weather; and the day before the battle, the soldiers drank all the wells in the village of Long Marston dry, and were then obliged to make use of ditch-water. Very few of them, too, I have heard Captain Hodgson say, ate above the quantity of a penny loaf, from the Monday to the Saturday morning. As for John, when I have turned to ask him how he and Sir Thomas fared, thinking they might have done better for themselves, Sir Thomas being a commander, John has always replied that he does not remember eating anything.

Well, I have a picture in my mind of York, with high grey battlemented walls and the towering minster, and within it the Earl of Newcastle, very handsome and urbane and sarcastic, as when I saw him at Bolling Hall, playing the lute and reading Vergil. There was some troop or regiment of his which men called the Whitecoats or the Lambs; they were but recently recruited from the northern border lands, and the Earl, not being able to get enough red cloth for them—for indeed the West Riding had no red dye left, having used so much—had taken up undyed white cloth and clothed them in that till he could get it coloured. (Whenever, in later days, Isaac Baume and I heard this part of the story, we looked at each other and tried not to smile, and looked away; for we thought we had a guilty knowledge of where a few pieces of that white cloth might come from, though we never betrayed our secret to John.) These Lambs, in the swaggering way of soldiers, after a while grew to like their white coats, and begged to keep them, saying they themselves would dye them red in the blood of their enemies, and the Earl allowed this, the fancy of it doubtless pleasing him. So these Whitecoats, and others in scarlet, all very gay in feathered hats, were swinging up and down the streets, in their secret hearts very tired of the siege and hoping for relief. And outside York, I see John and Sir Thomas, and David cantering happily away to Cambridge, and various Earls, and strange-speaking Scots, and Colonel Cromwell, very grim.

Over in Lancashire, having come up from southern parts, was Prince Rupert, very arrogant and dissipated and careless of everything but his purpose, and under the strictest commands from the King to relieve York at any cost. In Bradford we trembled suddenly, and from sheer fright I was sorely tempted to go down to the Baumes and stay with them, when we heard the rumour that Prince Rupert was coming over into Yorkshire, for in Lancashire he had burned and slaughtered cruelly. But mercifully he did not come our way, but chose a more northerly road through Wharfedale. When our men heard of his approach, they left the siege of

York and marched out westward a few miles towards Long Marston, and faced north-west, ready to meet him. Prince Rupert, however, with much skill turned northwards, and by crossing three rivers very rapidly got right across to the far bank of the Ouse, and entered York from the east side. Our men were bitterly disappointed when they heard this, and they camped on Marston Moor that Monday night, in a sour mood.

Next morning all the commanders had a council, as to whether they should retreat away or turn back and fight, and the Scottish Earl was determined, it seems, to retreat and wait a better day. How Sir Thomas came out of this council cocking his hat and throwing his cloak under his arm, as he used when he was vexed, I have often heard John tell. So our men, very cross and hungry and thirsty, turned south and drew away, Sir Thomas and Colonel Cromwell having the position of danger and retiring last, while parties of Royalist horse came out, as they thought, and harassed them. How it was they suddenly discerned that these parties were not mere parties at all, but the whole army of the Royalists, I do not understand, though I have often enough asked John to explain it to me—it is one of those military mysteries hidden from women—but Sir Thomas saw it sharp enough, and sent a very hot alarm off to his father and the Earls, to recall them. They turned round quickly, and marched back to Marston Moor. But the Royalists were already spread all over the level Moor, so our men disposed themselves facing them in a rye field which sloped downwards somewhat from a ridge. I have a very clear picture of this sloping rye field, for what with the height of the corn, and the warmth of the day, and some showers which fell which made the ground slippery, it was a very uncomfortable position.

The greater part of the day, it seems, was taken up with all these marchings and counter-marchings, and it was five o'clock in the evening before the armies were drawn up face to face, only a ditch and a hedge separating them. It was in this drawing up of the troops that John had a first taste of

Colonel Cromwell's quality. Hitherto, he has said, though he had seen Cromwell in and out of Sir Thomas's quarters many times in the leaguer, he had taken no great fancy for him, because the Colonel wore a suit of very poor cloth. This went contrary to all John's feelings; very good cloth is made down Norwich way, he has often said to me, and the Colonel, though he might have had the shabbiest and oldest suit in the world for all John would care, ought to have had an eye for good workmanship, and not gone about in ill-wove stuff, which as it were pretended to be something it was not. This, and something abrupt in the Colonel's manner to Sir Thomas, had roused a slight disinclination to him in John's mind. But while the army was hastening back, somewhat in disorder, to Marston Moor, by the roadside in Long Marston John saw a troop of foot waiting—or rather, half a troop of foot, the other half not being yet come up—when Colonel Cromwell rode swiftly to them and bade them march. Their captain, not having half his men and perhaps resenting an order from one who was not in truth his commander, desired the Colonel to have a little patience; whereupon Cromwell said simply: "March!" It was not said impatiently, said John, or in anger, but with such a stern and powerful resolution as was quite irresistible; the troop marched at once without a word. From that time, John had a conviction that Oliver Cromwell—Noll as the soldiers called him—was a mighty man of valour and a powerful instrument in the hand of God. But I do not think he ever loved him as he loved Sir Thomas. Cromwell was a man, in those days at least, of true piety, of unswerving zeal in the cause of God; and he had a good understanding of the common folk and cared much that such honest ordinary folk should have their rights and liberties respected and be able to serve God in peace according as their conscience taught them. In fighting he was unrivalled because of his unshakable resolution; there was indeed iron in the man. By nature he was just and honest, decent and sober, kind and homely. But he had not that high soul, that delicate obility of spirit, nor that wide vision, which marked

Sir Thomas, and this difference showed in their looks—at least, if we can believe the prints, for I never myself saw Cromwell. It is odd how ordinary folk's lives are ordered for them by people whom they never see—King Charles, and Laud, and Cromwell, and Charles II—I never saw any of them in the flesh, never exchanged a word with them, yet they dealt me happiness and sorrow. I knew their faces from the prints sold of them, however, and their acts from the diurnals. Oliver was a stout plain sturdy man with plain strong features, a practical sensible-looking man who had no thought for poetry and beauty; Sir Thomas's dark dreamy face was the face of a philosopher and a poet, his eyes saw the inward significance of things. Oliver's gaze was always fixed on the matter in hand; he was never able to see what he was doing as part of the long turbulent stream of history, nor was he ever able, I think, to conceive that his enemies believed themselves to have right on their side. Well! He made history enough, certainly; and Marston Moor was one of the places where this history-making began.

I can see the armies facing each other in silence, each waiting for the other to accept the disadvantage of crossing the ditch, and then our men, led, I doubt not, by Cromwell's Ironsides, beginning to sing psalms. They stood there a couple of hours, while Prince Rupert's standard, five yards long, flapped in the breeze and our men sang; and then suddenly, and partly by accident as it seemed, the battle was joined.

What a battle looks like when joined I have no notion; I can only picture to myself pairs of men with arms up-lifted and grimacing crimson faces, striking furiously at each other, and the red blood starting out at the blows. I have a picture of John in his shirt sleeves, very hot but very grim and steady, wheeling bullets in a wheelbarrow from the farmhouse on the ridge, where they were being cast, to the soldiers, the farmer's son with another wheelbarrow behind him. I have a picture of poor Mr. Ferrand, struck off his horse by a blow on the head, falling into one of the bushes of gorse which strewed the moor—he told me the gorse-

spincs, during the long moment while he fell, appeared as large as spears. And then I have a terrible picture of confusion, fire and smoke and frightened faces and breathless running men, horses tossing their manes and galloping with stirrups jerking and flying, the Scots at first firing very expertly, then crying out in their strange high tongue and running as if furies pursued them, men colliding in their panic with a fearful jar and rushing on unheeding, men rolling in agony on the ground with horses charging down on them—fire and smoke and fear and blood.

For the truth is, both sides ran away that day; Cromwell and Sir Thomas Fairfax on the left and right doing well with their horse, but the centre failing utterly, and then while Sir Thomas's horse was away pursuing the enemy, the rest of that wing thrown into complete confusion by the Royalist horse. Sir Thomas returning from his charge could do little with them, for they were "fresh-water" and frightened; they gave at the first onslaught and he could not rally them. Prince Rupert and his Cavaliers suddenly appeared through the smoke right at the top of the ridge, where the baggage and ordnance of the Parliament were placed, having ridden through the whole of our army, whereat the waggons and carters fled away in spite of all John and the officer in charge could do, though John shouted and banged at them; he felt the most fearful humiliation at his failure, but it turned out the best that could have been done, for Prince Rupert and his men, thinking the battle over and won, fell to plundering the waggons. John caught a flying horse, his own being gone, and rode off down the hill to try to find Sir Thomas; by a chance he came upon him, galloping towards the left wing to get to Cromwell. There was a deep cut on his left cheek and he had taken out the white favour, which was the sign of the Parliament men, from his hat; he saw not John, but simply galloped his hardest in the opposite direction from safety. John went after him, but lost him in the smoke; and while he halted there, panting and looking at the various single combats about him and deciding where to join in, there rose a strange

thunderous noise ahead, and out of the smoke came charging Cromwell and his Ironsides and Sir Thomas, who had fetched them thus to where they were needed. John hastily drew to one side and the buff-coats thundered past him, seeming to sweep everything away in front of them, said John, as if they were reaping a field. "God made them as stubble to our swords," said Colonel Cromwell after to Sir Thomas of this charge, and indeed, said John, it was so. The Royalists wheeled round and fell back on Prince Rupert's horse, so that now our men were on the moor and the Royalists in the rye field. But Prince Rupert's horse were in disorder, being busy with plunder, and so, suddenly the Royalists gave, and fled in all directions—all but those Whitecoats, who resisted so stoutly, declining quarter, that every one of them fell.

By this time it was nine o'clock at night and growing dusk, but there was a clear moon, at full or very near it, and the Parliament men pursued the Royalists to within a mile of York in the moonlight. I see the lanes, dark and white in patches, and hear the heavy hoofs and uneven breath of the tired horses. And then a worse thing began, for some of the Parliament men fell to stripping the dead bodies, and some even that were not dead, so that they lay white and naked in the moonlight, in spite of Sir Thomas, who galloped up and down, exhorting the soldiers to mercy. Four thousand fell on both sides, English and Scots, by the computation of the villagers, who had to bury them; an officer of the King's, asking permission next day to give the corpses of some of the noblest of those fallen more honourable burial, was heard by John, who was sent with the party to take a note of those chosen, repeatedly to exclaim in pity for the King. "Alas, for King Charles!" said he—for indeed in that battle the King lost upwards of two thousand of his noblest men.

And so this battle of Marston Moor was a great victory. The Earl of Newcastle fled to Holland, Prince Rupert himself had difficulty in getting off safe, York surrendered, and Yorkshire was cleared of Royalist armies. But at first we in

Bradford did not know this. At first, on the Wednesday morning, the whole countryside was possessed with the noise of the total overthrow of the Parliament's forces, and this rumour gained colour from the undoubted fact that all the three Earls on our side, the two Earls and Lord Fairfax I mean, had certainly at one time fled from the battlefield. The Scottish Earl arrived at Leeds in the middle of the night, hatless and breathless and without even his own cloak about him; it was but natural that this story spread all over the West Riding by next forenoon, so that Isaac Baume brought it up to us and my Sam could not eat his breakfast. Indeed I had not much heart for food myself; a battle, I thought, and John in it, and Sir Thomas beaten! I did not doubt that our side would triumph in the end, but the end receded very far down the years when such news came as this. The magnitude of the armies engaged, more than twenty thousand apiece, as we heard, made the battle a disaster to whichever side lost it. At The Breck we went about all day very tight-lipped and silent, each performing our duty very grimly and sternly and with rather more conscience than usual, to prove to ourselves that we were not and did not intend to be daunted. We shall win in the end, we said, and set our minds to long endurance.

Then next day Baume told us there was another rumour, a rumour of victory. A messenger had reached the Scottish Earl at noon, though before he left his bed, it was said, telling him of a great victory for the Parliament, and urging him to return to his forces before York. But this we did not credit, for it seemed too good to be true; we went about grimly as before, and for my part I expected a victorious Royalist army to appear by Bradford Church at any moment. So I took thought, and sent our cow back into the Ferrands' laithe again, and that night we moved the few tools and pans we had into Holroyd Hall, effecting an entrance by Sam breaking a pane with his hand covered and then opening the window latch from within.

When Sam came back from Bradford Market next day (it being Thursday), however, he said the news of victory

was bruited abroad everywhere, and many believed it to be true. But I did not allow myself to believe it until Sunday morning in church, when our under-minister, a godly youth they had found from somewhere by the name of Blazet, beaming and smiling went up into the pulpit in order to read out to us a letter which, he said, was a copy of one which mayors of certain other towns in Yorkshire had received from the Lord Fairfax. A great hush fell on the congregation as he said this, and we listened very intently.

Mr. Mayor, it began—and I shall never forget the lad's shrill excited voice as he read—

Mr. Mayor, After a dark cloud, it hath pleased God to show the sunshine of His glory in victory over His enemies, who are driven into the walls of York, many of their chief officers slain, and all their ordnance and ammunition taken, with small loss (I praise God) on our side. This is all I can now write; resting your assured, FERDINANDO FAIRFAX.

The letter was dated, said our young minister, from Marston Moor on the evening of Tuesday, that is the day of the battle; and he went on to explain how, and from whom, he had received this letter, and how its authority was secure. But even without this explanation I should have credited the letter, for it sounded so exactly like Lord Fairfax—blunt and lumbering and not very clever but honest, even as he.

For a moment we were all stunned, and could hardly believe our ears, but then the minister gave out the numbers of the psalms, and we sang, and then we believed the news, and tears rolled down our faces as we sang; *Not unto us, O Lord*, we sang, and *If the Lord had not been on our side, now may Israel say*. God knows there were thankful hearts that day, in Bradford!

SIR THOMAS EARNS A JEWEL

IT WAS WONDERFUL how the fortunes of our cause looked up after that day, and the fortunes of my own family followed them.

The Parliament empowered Lord Fairfax to fill up the vacant pulpits in Yorkshire, several being thus vacant because their ministers had left them to join the Royalist forces; and he named Will first as his own chaplain, and then as vicar of Kirklington, a small place in the North Riding. Dear Will rode over to tell me the news, his solemn face beaming; he had all manner of notions to account for his sudden promotion, and I had not the heart to tell him that it probably depended on his being the brother of John Thorpe's wife. Some few months after, I do not quite remember how many now, the Rector of Adel, that tyrannical Dr. Hitch, was excluded from Adel by an Act of Parliament against pluralities—he already held two benefices and a deanery, elsewhere. This living of Adel was in the gift of a connection of Sir Thomas's, and it was offered to Will; and so within a year Will and Eliza were back again in the place where they had long ministered, but with fuller authority, and very deeply content they were to be there.

Then, which I am afraid I cared for more closely, David, having returned to Cambridge, took his degree as Bachelor of Divinity, and so one of my most cherished hopes was fulfilled. In the spring, to my great joy, he received further honours; for the university being now reformed, and upwards of two hundred Royalists expelled therefrom, David was made a Fellow of Clare. David, dear lad, told me in a letter that he was distressed that he had taken another man's fellowship, even if he were a Royalist; but I wrote in

reply pointing out to him how Thomas would attend Cambridge, I hoped, in a few years' time, and how relieved I was to know that the boy would receive sound doctrine from his tutors, and how many mothers and fathers would feel the same. David's reply to this was, as soon as he drew some of his Fellow's stipend, to send money to me by the carrier, for Thomas to take lessons from some near-by minister. This was a great joy to all of us; I put Thomas to study with Mr. Blazet, and he progressed very quickly, and soon read his Greek testament with the best, and began on Hebrew. David sent me the money for it every quarter. I must own that I was guilty, not of a lie but of a suppression of the truth, about this money. It was hard for one of my pride that my neighbours should know, or guess, that my husband sent me nothing towards the family's upkeep, and when Baume by some casual reference showed that he thought Thomas's study fees came from John, the truth stuck in my throat and I did not undeceive him, either then or later. This was not kind of me towards David, and I was the more remorseful because David was not apt to be kind to himself. He was much clearer sighted than Will, for instance, about his promotion as Fellow, for in his gentle jesting style he wrote that, although he hoped neither his scholarship nor his zeal would prove unequal to his new state, he feared he owed it less to those qualifications than to a letter John had written on his behalf to the Earl who was the head of the reforming commission. And indeed I think he may have been right, for John's close connection with Sir Thomas was very well known to that Earl (who was one of the commanders who ran away at Marston), and at that time everybody was eager to please Sir Thomas Fairfax, seeing he had just been appointed Lord General of all the Parliament's forces.

It happened in this way. Oliver Cromwell was greatly dissatisfied with the conduct of the war; partly he objected to the Earls who were commanding the Parliament's forces, thinking them slothful and dilatory and too greatly sympathetic to the King, whom they wished to chastise perhaps but not truly to defeat; and partly to the army itself, which

was indeed not one army, but a different army in every county, not well trained to act in unison, and apt to fall away if asked to fight in a part of England not its own. Cromwell attacked the Earls in Parliament, and after a great deal of talk and tribulation, in order to get rid of them without offence, a law was passed they called the Self-Denying Ordinance, which forbade any member of either House to hold an army command. Thus all the Earls were knocked out of it, and Lord Fairfax too, seeing they all sat in the House of Lords, and Cromwell himself who was a member of the House of Commons; but not Sir Thomas, who belonged to neither. And so Sir Thomas had the command and was made the Lord General, which was what Cromwell had been aiming at all the time, for he had fought at Black Tom's side and knew his worth. I daresay Parliament, which being in London is a long way from Yorkshire, might not have rated Sir Thomas so high, but Cromwell I think urged his abilities with great resolution, and carried the day. Sir Thomas was summoned to London and went there very privately, and then four members of the House of Commons came to fetch him thither, which was a great honour, and he stood at the bar of the House, beyond which only members may pass, and was informed of his appointment by the Speaker. John was one of those in attendance on him then, and saw it all; it was a proud day for him as for Sir Thomas.

After a little delay Sir Thomas's commission passed the Lords as well, and then the Lord General went to Windsor, which was appointed as a rendez-vous for all the army, and began to arrange it on a New Model. He had a secretary—a very learned lawyer, though a Yorkshireman I am glad to say—appointed for him by the Parliament, and a Council of Officers, and an Army paymaster, and everything very grand; when I read of all this I thought perhaps John might now come home, but he did not. Sir Thomas and his officers put in a petition to Parliament that Colonel Cromwell might be excepted from the Self-Denying Ordinance, and be made their Lieutenant-General, the second in command; the Parliament h'med and ha'ed a

good deal about this, but eventually granted the exception for forty days; then they extended it to three months, and so on, until at last it was forgotten that any exception was needed.

So Sir Thomas and Cromwell, the Lord General and the Lieutenant-General, set to work, and enlisted this New Model Army, picking their officers and men very carefully, so that they should all be honest godly men, experienced in siege and battle, fighting for their beliefs, and thus very steady and not easily daunted. Captain Hodgson was one of those enlisted, and so was Denton, Sarah's husband.

For John's part, he says in those spring months he never had a full night's sleep, there was so much to be done. He kept all Sir Thomas's private accounts, and household accounts, and now Sir Thomas was the Lord General, these were much increased. Moreover, it was John's duty to keep a courteous check on Lady Fairfax's expenditure, which was not an easy matter. It was Lady Fairfax's great delight to burst in upon the General at all hours of the day; it was John's part to give her no excuse for these incursions, to keep her out without letting her see that she was so kept. Then again, Lady Fairfax had no great liking for Cromwell, whom she suspected—rightly enough, as it proved—of being a sectary, an Independent, who believed that each congregation of the faithful was a law unto itself, and that a man need not square with every Presbyterian ruling in matters of religion to be a true Parliament man, so he were guided by reason and light and faithful to the cause. Such notions were abhorrent to Lady Fairfax, whose father had brought her up in strictly Presbyterian ways. It was best, therefore, to keep Lady Fairfax and the Lieutenant-General apart, when that could be effected. Then there was so much writing and figuring to do, enlisting afresh so many thousand men and providing them with arms and coats and horses and commanders, that everyone about Sir Thomas was pressed into this service, and sat at it day and night. But they all laboured very steadily and eagerly, seeing the great advantage of the New Model to the cause, and Sir Thomas set them a high example of unrelenting toil; and so by the

midst of the springtime the army was on the move—I remember on one of the monthly fast days recently appointed by the Parliament for remembering our cause before God, we prayed for His merciful assistance to this New Army now on march.

His assistance was granted indeed, for the New Model swept all before it, and that very rapidly. There was soon a great battle in the middle of England, at a hamlet called Naseby, when the Royalists were so totally routed that they never raised their heads again in this war.

My John was nearly taken prisoner in this battle—a hazard that makes me cold still to think of. He and the General's secretary, being commanded to remain behind with the baggage waggons to care for the General's papers and the soldiers' pay, were waiting there anxiously, talking to the commander of the guard in charge of the waggons, when a small party of horse came up at the gallop. Their leader was a tall man of dark complexion, and wore a red montero, so the commander of the guard mistook him for the General, and approached him hat in hand, meaning to ask him how the day went. But John suddenly shouted at him, for the horseman was not Sir Thomas at all but Prince Rupert, so the commander drew back and gave the order to his guard to load; the Prince laughed and called out to know whether they would have quarter; they all shouted: "No!" and the guard gave fire, whereupon the Cavaliers galloped off.

This incident was related in a pamphlet published at that time, of a letter describing the battle writ by the General's secretary; I did not know then that John was with him by the waggons, but heard it later from John. It gave me a strange feeling, however, to read in print of a *red montero like the General's*, for I remembered Sir Thomas's red montero so well, and the exclamations Lady Fairfax had made upon his lack of it, at our house-door on the day of Adwalton Moor. I felt as if we Thorpes were illuminated by Sir Thomas's glory, with being so close to him, and I own I held my head a little higher for the pleasure and pride of having the acquaintance of the Lord General of the Parliament's armics and the victor of Naseby. As for

Sam, his roguish little face wore a perpetual grin from joy at his hero's triumph; the clothiers of the district made quite a pet of him, from eagerness to hear his stories of the General, and many a one tried to buy Sir Thomas's boots from him at a high price—tried, but tried in vain. There began to be many prints of the portrait of Sir Thomas published, and Sam, who earned a few pence sometimes by running errands and holding horses and the like at Leeds and Bradford markets, where he went with Isaac Baume, put these aside thriftily and bought himself such a print. It showed the wound got at Marston Moor on Sir Thomas's left cheek, which for some reason gave Sam especial pleasure.

I was glad of my son's admiration for Sir Thomas, for such an admiration, provided it be for a man of the right kind, is right and proper in a lad and brings out the best in him. But even had I not been glad, I could not have scolded him for it, when Parliament itself displayed an admiration quite as strong. So pleased were both Houses with their General's success at Naseby that they made him a very noble gift: a fair jewel set with diamonds of great value, to be hung round his neck on a blue ribbon. I have seen this jewel—yes, I have seen it, though in very different times from those when it was given. It was a kind of locket, made of two plates of gold. On one plate was a picture in coloured work, enamel I think, of Sir Thomas on the chestnut mare from his own stud, which he rode at Naseby, in front of a distant battle; on the other plate a picture of the House of Commons. Inside, there was a presentation of the battle of Naseby, and *Non Nobis* on a scroll. Indeed it was a very rich fine handsome jewel, and beautiful as well; after I had seen it I determined to copy some part of it with my needle, and so Sir Thomas and his mare and the battle and the scroll live in the set work on our best chair to-day. It was the last piece of fine needlework I undertook.

This Naseby jewel cost seven hundred pounds to make, they say. Whatever it cost, its price could not reach the value of Sir Thomas's services to English liberty—I do not need my Sam to tell me that!

A ROYALIST COMPOUNDS

THAT YEAR WE had a heavy visitation of the plague in the West Riding.

Some said that the Scots, who were then quartered on us, had brought it with them, but as to that I do not know. Wherever there is war, there is plague, it seems to me, from what I have read in the history books, though why it should be so I do not altogether understand. I was greatly troubled as the tale of deaths mounted, the more so as I remembered how it had been said before, of the plague in which old Mrs. Thorpe died, that the infection was carried in a pack of wool. Sam was always busy sorting wool, and then too he visited constantly at the markets, where, many people being gathered together, the infection was apt to spread. I wearied myself with thinking what was best to be done, and when one hot August week the deaths in Bradford mounted to the number of twenty-five, I took a resolution, and at breakfast one day told Thomas and Sam that they should go that forenoon to their uncle's in Adel, and stay there till the plague was passed. They stared at me in silence.

"Leave The Breck?" growled Sam.

"If my father came home and found it empty, he would be greatly disappointed," said Thomas in his clear gentle way. "Besides, there are the oats to harvest."

"The Breck would not be empty—I should never dream of leaving The Breck empty," I explained hurriedly. "I shall stay here, and Chris, alas, is not old enough to leave me, so he must stay too."

"You mean, you will stay here alone with Chris?" queried Thomas, his eyes wide.

"Mother, you must be daft!" said Sam.

"Now, Sam," said I: "You know I do not like you to use such homely expressions."

For indeed this was one of my troubles at that time, though a small one: Sam, being about so much with Isaac Baume, amid merchants and weavers and clothiers, was growing very homely in his speech and ways. He said *d'you see*, and *daft*, and *choose how*, and so on, and pronounced his words in a very rough homely fashion, such as we Clarksons had never been accustomed to. I tried to correct him, but I did not like to be always on the lad's back, as we say, for indeed it was not his fault, but that of his company. And then Sam was such a good, stout, warm-hearted lad, so sure and steady in everything he undertook, and we all depended so much on him in all practical matters, that I had not the heart to scold him. Although at this time he was still a mere child, he was already very skilful in all matters concerning cloth, eager to learn more and impatient when Isaac Baume could not answer his questions. "If mi feyther were whoam," growled Sam on these occasions, saying the words *my father* and *home* thus broadly to express his general irritation: "If mi feyther were whoam, he'd show yon Baume summat." Then I would make a remonstrance to him, saying how kind Mr. Baume had been to us, and how vexed his father would be to hear him speaking thus roughly. "He'd be more vexed if he saw Baume's cloth," said Sam with a twinkle in his eye, teasing me. I sometimes troubled myself the more over Sam's speech because it differed increasingly from Thomas's, and it would have been intolerable to me that my sons should be unfriendly or contemptuous one of the other. But in that matter my uneasiness was wasted; though Thomas became more the fluent-speaking scholar, and Sam the Yorkshire clothier, every day, they did not trouble that they differed, but respected each other's qualities and remained staunch friends. With Chris too they were unfailingly kind and loving; I noticed with a quiet pleasure how Sam's speech grew less rough, and Thomas's less learned, whenever they addressed their baby brother.

"Well, Mother," said Sam now in a reasonable tone, "if you can tell me a better word nor daft for what you said, I'll use it."

"You are in danger, here, Sam," I said: "The plague grows every day. At Adel you would be out of the infection."

"Let Thomas go to Adel and study his book with Uncle Will instead of Mr. Blazet," said Sam. "I shall not leave you, Mother."

"I shall not leave The Breck till Father comes," said Thomas quietly.

"To leave you and Chris! The idea! I never heard such nonsense! Daft, I call it," grumbled Sam. "You don't want your brothers to leave you, do you, Chris lovey?"

Chris, understanding, as children do, by the tone though not the words, that some reply was expected of him, beat his spoon on the table very heartily.

"That's a good lad," said Sam, delighted. "No, you don't want us to leave you. No." He shook his head gravely, and Chris imitated him, laughing joyously, so that it was pretty to see them together. Indeed Chris was the sweetest, merriest child, and the quickest in understanding, I ever saw.

So we all stayed on at The Breck together. But the plague in Bradford grew and grew that autumn; the deaths amounted to two hundred in September, and still increased. With what anxiety I watched Sam daily, to see if he looked heavy or haggard or had signs of the fatal bubo on him, I shall never forget; it left a heavy mark on me. Then at last one day Baume, looking very grave, announced that he thought we must cease from our cloth trade for a while, it was too dangerous. This was a relief to me, though it would make us much the poorer; we both determined, the Baumes and ourselves, to stay on our own land and not draw nigh to anyone till the danger should be overpast; and Sam put a chain on our gate and built it up with furze and twigs, in order that Chris, who was growing very swift on his feet though uncertain, and was of a roving mischievous disposition so that with the work of the house to do I could scarcely manage to keep an eye on him,

should not stray out into the lane and run the hazard of meeting some person bearing the infection.

So I shall never forget the horror and self-reproach I felt when one bright autumn forenoon, the older boys being at work in the fields, glancing out of an upstairs window I saw Chris talking to a man, a stranger. Right in front of the house the two were standing, Chris swaying on his feet a little and his petticoats blowing in the wind, looking up into this man's face and laughing.

"Chris! Chris!" I cried out in an agony. "Come away!"

Chris looked up at me and laughed, but did not stir, and the man actually bent down and took the child's hand in his own.

Then I gave a wail of anguish, for the plague infection is easily carried by touching, and I ran down and out before the house, and cried to Chris again and snatched him away and ran, scolding over my shoulder at the stranger.

"I have not been in Bradford, Penninah," he called after me. "I have come directly hither from Wakefield. Believe me, I have not been nigh any infection."

At this use of my name I turned to look at him, and I knew him at once; it was Giles Ferrand. Though indeed he was greatly changed, poor man; his shanks shrunken, his florid face flaccid and melancholy, and part of his hair shaved off, revealing a swollen purple patch on his scalp which looked very tender. One of the moustaches of which he used to be so proud still stayed up firm and curled, but the other drooped mournfully, so that his fingers continually strayed to it. His eyes, faded and rheumy, had a piteous defeated look about them, like a beaten hound's.

"I have not been nigh any infection," he repeated stiffly. "I saw this youngster tumbling about by the beck just now, and went to his assistance, that is all."

"Well," I began, and paused and drew breath, for I was in doubt what I ought to say to him. "Well! You have returned from the war then, Mr. Ferrand?"

"Aye. I got a bang on the head at Marston, and it does not heal," he said, lifting his fingers to the purple scar.

It seemed a sign from Heaven that he should approach our house holding Chris by the hand, and I thought: However it be, I cannot deny admittance to my own son's grandfather. So I said:

"Come in, and welcome."

His face brightened a little, and he followed me in and sat himself down by the fireside in the kitchen, and stretched out his hands to the blaze as if he had been chilled to the marrow. I noticed how white and thin and gnarled his fingers were, and how his shoulders stooped and his mouth pouted, in the manner of old people, and I remembered many old times when he had been kind to me, and how his wife had taught me her skill in embroidery, and I looked at Chris, who was leaning against his knee, and I remembered Francis. Then I felt a warmth in my heart towards the old man, and I spoke kindly to him, calling him Uncle Giles, and I fetched some ale and warmed and spiced it. He drank gratefully, but I saw his eye on the cheap rough tankard, though he was too mannerly to speak of it. This gave me an opening, and I said:

"We have had hard times at The Breck in your absence, Uncle."

"The King's men have had hard times, too," he said, sighing mournfully.

"Doubtless; but the Hall has not been sacked like The Breck," I told him.

"The Breck sacked?" he said, startled.

So then I told him what the Royalists had done to us, and he told me how, after the Earl of Newcastle had revoked the order for no quarter, there had been high words between them, and he had betaken himself to the garrison at York, to be out of the sight of Bradford. He had suffered all the siege of York, and fought at Marston Moor, and got away in the train of Prince Rupert, and marched all over England, and fought again at Naseby. The poor man, at first very stiff and mindful of the political differences between our families, as he spoke of his troubles grew softer, and presently broke down and wept on my shoulder very piteously.

"I have crept home to die, Penninah," said he. "The King—God bless him!—is lost, and my heart is broken."

"But they are still fighting," I objected. "I know that our cause will triumph at last, but it surprises me that you already admit it to be so."

"My heart is broken," he murmured. "The King is vanquished."

I pressed him to tell me why he thought so, but that day he would not, merely sighing heavily and shaking his head. To cheer him, I told him how his name and his laithe had saved our cow, whereat he exclaimed and smiled, then took to shaking his head again.

When my boys came in from the fields and found him there, Thomas frowned slightly and shrank into himself and barely opened his lips in greeting, while Sam glowered and was rude outright. I could not find it in my conscience either to command or to coax them into a more gracious behaviour to the cause's enemy, though for my part I saw him only as a lonely old man; and Mr. Ferrand, seeing how things were, rose up and took his leave.

"You have three fine lads, Penninah," he said, looking round at them wistfully. Chris, whom Sam had put into the high chair he had made for him, to be ready for dinner, chose this moment to laugh his golden laugh and beat joyously with his spoon; Mr. Ferrand stooped to him, smiling, and patted his cheek.

"'Tis long since I saw anything as good as you, little man," said he.

It was a strange and poignant moment for me, tugging at my heartstrings almost as if it would break them. I could not speak.

Giles Ferrand, straightening himself, explained that he had brought Ralph back with him, and that he should keep only the old manservant to wait on him for the present, at the Hall. If Ralph could be of use with the harvest, he offered, we were to call on him—but here Sam glowered very noticeably, so I was obliged politely to refuse.

When he had gone: "Why did you invite him into the

house, Mother?" said Thomas in his clear quiet voice. "He is a Royalist, and I do not like him."

"He is your father's uncle, a lonely old man who has lost both wife and son, and a defeated enemy; we must show him kindness and pity," I said.

"I did not like Captain Ferrand," said Sam shortly.

"But Mr. Ferrand loved him—as you love Christopher," I said.

Sam glanced at Chris, who, his mouth smothered in porridge, gave him the sweetest, brightest smile imaginable.

"I never saw such a boy as you for getting your mouth dirty, Chris," said Sam in a severe tone, wiping the child's mouth energetically, "Never! Your hands, too!" Chris, looking serious, stretched out his hands, and Sam cleaned each little finger separately. "That's better—that's a good boy," he said, mollified, and Chris, hearing in his tone that he was forgiven, smiled again and stretched out one clean hand to me to see what I thought of it.

After this Sam and Thomas did not glower and shrink, but behaved with a complete though cool respect, when they found Mr. Ferrand by our hearthside—which was well, for he came often. He did not stay long, and always hauled himself up and tottered away as soon as the boys came in, but he liked to sit an hour or two with me, watching me while I cooked or cleaned or sewed; it seemed to soothe and cheer him.

In these quiet hours Giles Ferrand talked and talked, flitting from one subject to another, as old people do, and I murmured occasional responses; he talked of his wife, of his son, and of his experiences in the war; of these last especially I heard many interesting particulars. I soon began to understand why he thought the King's cause hopeless, for his tales revealed so much silliness, and so much confusion, among the King's commanders, as did any Parliamentarian's heart good to listen to. He spoke of Prince Rupert's tiresome whimsies and fancies—his standard, which was nigh on five yards long, and embroidered in so thick a gold that it was almost as much

as a man could do to carry it; his dog Boy, which he would always have near him even in battle, so that the poor thing lost its life at Marston. It seemed that the Earl of Newcastle had not been best pleased at Prince Rupert's arrival to raise the siege of York; he was glad enough of the relief of the siege, but did not fancy giving up his command to a man so many years his junior. The Earl did not wish to give battle then at all, said Giles Ferrand, but Prince Rupert said he had a letter from the King commanding it; he would not produce the letter when asked, however, which caused many of the officers to look at each other uneasily. Again, said Uncle Giles, the soldiers within York, when urged to march out and give battle, fell into a raging mutiny, they being many weeks in arrears with pay, and the Prince and the Earl must needs harangue them for an hour to get them moving. The Earl of Newcastle, he said, was ever kindly disposed to him on account of Francis, and on the very evening when Marston was fought, Giles was in the Earl's coach smoking a pipe with him. The Prince had sent word that there would be no battle that night, so the Earl withdrew to his coach to be comfortable, when suddenly the ordnance began raging, and the Earl had to throw on his armour all in a huddle and rush out to the battle. After the defeat at Marston, Prince Rupert, to do him justice, wished the Earl to retire to the north and recruit his forces to fight again, but the Earl said no, he could not endure the laughter of the court at his defeat, he should fly to Holland.

"How can a cause be won with such commanders?" said Giles.

"How indeed?" murmured I, and I thought with great satisfaction of Sir Thomas Fairfax and Oliver Cromwell, who were commanders of such different quality.

"'Tis no wonder the King does not come into his own again," lamented Giles, shaking his bruised old head, then putting up his hand to it.

"Does your head pain you, Uncle?" I said, to distract him from the King's sorrows.

"No—no. I've always been strong and hearty, not one for pains," said old Giles peevishly. "If I'd not had this bang on the head I'd have lived to a good old age, Penninah."

I expect there were many such old Royalist soldiers crept home from the wars, by many a kitchen hearth that winter, crouched close to the fire to warm their blood thinned by hardships and rough weather, their feet and elbows well tucked in so as to be out of the way and seem to take up no space, their shoulders drooping, their voices droning. I daresay, too, they set their hostesses back a good deal in fuel and food and drink, as Giles did me. I did not grudge it, though sometimes I smiled ruefully over his appetite and his liking for a heaped-up fire. Baume wondered that I could be so kind to a Royalist, but in truth I was glad of his company, which made a very welcome extension to a social circle bounded for overlong by Isaac Baume and my two boys—then too, as the plague waned, with Thomas at Mr. Blazet's and Sam at market or helping Isaac Baume on his land or ours, which we farmed together, my lads were much away from the house during the daytime, and I was lonely. Besides, Giles played with Chris and kept him occupied while I was busy.

Having nothing else to do, as it seemed, for he did nothing towards putting his land under plough or pasture, save to lay in a few poor-looking sheep, Giles was always ready to play with Chris some game of ball or marbles, or tell him stories. These were of a martial kind, or about horses and dogs and hawks and hunts and the like, such as Chris did not hear from our family, and which therefore engaged his attention. As his brothers were so often out or occupied, and I was busied with the work of the house, Chris grew to turn to Giles for amusement, and slowly, and to me very poignantly, the old man's love fixed itself upon his grandchild. As Chris grew he was indeed a very lovely boy; his skin white, his nose straight, his eyes sparkling, his mouth very red and comely. His hair darkened a little from its baby gold, and swept about his head in great

thick rich russet curls. He was always very merry and fond of fun, with a sweet golden laugh, full of affection and knowing no malice; it was no wonder anyone should love him. Giles began to bring him presents: a woollen ball, a bow and arrows, a whip, a set of red woollen reins for driving; none of these toys were new, and I guessed they had belonged long ago to Francis, and Mrs. Ferrand had treasured them. Then, too, Giles taught Chris to play bowls on his private alley. Best of all in Chris's view, at Holroyd Hall there was a very ancient rocking horse, with painted red nostrils and black spots and somewhat threadbare tail; it was Chris's greatest joy to ride him. And so we often saw Giles Ferrand and Chris together; sometimes Giles was seated, talking, twirling his moustache that drooped, his faded old eyes very wide and innocent as he told some lengthy story; sometimes they were about the land together, crossing the beck to the Hall or back again, Chris skipping and leaping about so that the old man seemed almost to totter in the wind of his passing. Well, even if Giles tore my heart some times by saying with a chuckle over some daring liveliness of the child's: "My Frank was just the same when he was a lad," yet Chris was learning good manners and speech from his grandfather, I thought—and besides, I was glad for the old man to have some interest to distract him from his politics; for by this time the Royalist cause was falling in ruin, and the King had fled away in total defeat to the Scots, who were now negotiating on what terms to deliver him to Parliament.

It was one day about this time, as I remember, that Sam, coming in on a showery afternoon and finding old Giles seated by the hearth as usual, said to him in a very loud voice:

"Have you signed your composition yet, Mr. Ferrand?"

Giles was in truth a little deaf, but not very much so, and like all persons in that predicament disliked to be shouted at; it was one of Sam's ways of indicating his disapproval of Royalists, to speak loudly to him. But to-day I thought the old man's vexation out of all proportion, for

crying: "Eh? What? What are you talking about?" he rose up at once and almost ran from the house, though the rain outside still came down heavily. I scolded Sam a little, then asked what he had meant by his question. Sam said he did not properly know, but there was a great deal of talk in the market about delinquent Royalists' estates being sequestered, or some such word, and if they wanted to be let off they had to sign a composition. It seemed to me then that old Giles had understood Sam's question very well, and run from the truth of it, and I took the next chance I had to ask Isaac Baume about the matter. He told me: yes, it was true; the estates of all who had served against the Parliament were thus sequestered, confiscated wholly; but if the Royalist concerned made a petition saying he had given up his evil courses, and took the oath to Parliament, he was let off with a fine, and this was called *making your composition*. The great nobility, he said, were obliged to go to London to make this settlement, but he believed the lesser gentry could do it at the quarter sessions, locally. An oath had to be sworn before a minister or a magistrate.

"And what kind of a thing is this petition which must be signed?" I asked.

"Oh—a kind of obliging letter, d'you see," said Baume.

"Will you find out what it should be, and I will speak to my uncle about it?" I requested him.

In a week or two he brought me a couple of papers which he said were copies of the compositions of certain Royalists in Halifax and Bradford; he had bribed some clerk or other to get them for him. They were writ in a somewhat crabbed hand, so I laid them aside for the moment, and that evening bade Thomas read them to me.

"*This petition sheweth,*" read Thomas in his clear voice: "*That your petitioner was unhappily persuaded to take upon himself the command of Captain of a troop of horse under the command of the Earl of Newcastle, in which service he continued until September 1645, and being then convinced of his error——*"

"Mr. Ferrand won't like *that*," said Sam.

"—*did lay down arms,*" continued Thomas, "*and hath since lived at his house in Halifax since November last under the power of Parliament.*"

"That suits Mr. Ferrand's case very well," I said.

"*That he is heartily sorry for the said error and humbly submits to the mercy of Parliament,*" concluded Thomas.

"Whew!" said Sam. "Mr. Giles Ferrand of Holroyd Hall won't sign that, I promise you."

"What does the other paper say, Thomas?" I asked uneasily.

"*That your petitioner assisted the forces raised against the Parliament for which he craves pardon for his offence and voluntarily submitteth himself,*" read Thomas.

"That is not so—humiliating," I said, more hopefully.

"Why should you persuade him to make his composition, Mother?" said Sam. "Let him have his whole estate sequestered, or whatever it is; he's a malignant Royalist and well deserves it."

"His laithe sheltered our cow," mentioned Thomas.

"You and our Mother are too good to live," grumbled Sam. "It's only Chris and me that has any sense in us."

It was on Thomas's lips, I saw, to say that Chris had a fondness for Mr. Ferrand, but I shook my head at him to forbid the utterance, for I did not want Sam's love for Chris clouded by jealousy.

Next time I had Giles Ferrand to myself, I began in a very frank manner on him, saying I was sorry Sam had vexed him by referring to his composition, which must be a very sore trouble to him, although necessary.

"Necessary?" growled old Giles.

"Others seem to find it so," I said, and I mentioned the names of some notable Royalists in the neighbourhood who, according to common gossip, had already compounded or were about to do so, Sir Richard Tempest of Bolling Hall being one of these latter. Giles seemed struck by this, and fingered his drooping moustache thoughtfully.

"Aye, but," he burst out suddenly, "I shall have to take an oath and make a submission."

"There is some sort of a negative oath, I hear," I urged him, "never to fight again, or some such promise. It can be sworn before our Mr. Blazet here. If Sir Richard Tempest can take it, surely you can."

"And there is a petition to draw," he objected in a weakly, pceevish tone.

"Why, that is simple," I said checrfully, and I began to tell him some of the words Thomas had read to me, which I had committed to memory for this end. But when I reached *craves pardon*, poor Mr. Ferrand went off like a cannon.

"Never! Never!" he shouted, swelling and bristling in his chair. "I have done no wrong and will crave no pardon. Me ask pardon of a set of pestilential Roundheads! You must be mad!"

I left the matter for that time, but returned to it again often, so that it became a regular dispute between us in the next few months. I was determined he should compound, and pay his fine, and then live at peace, for I could not endure to think of the old man having his whole estate taken from him, and being imprisoned perhaps, as a persistent delinquent; I felt too that till all Royalists had thus compounded, we should have no true peace and comfort in the land. But Giles was as strongly determined against composition. "I have committed no error, and so cannot be convinced of it," he argued stoutly. "I have fought for the right, and no man living shall make me say otherwise." And again: "I will not crawl in the dust for any Parliament." At last one day, in a fury, his flaccid cheeks purple and quivering, he struck his fist on the table and shouted at me:

"Never open this subject to me again, Penninah!"

"It shall be as you please, Uncle Giles," I said quietly. "But I could not stand by and see you ruined, without trying to save you."

There was a pause; I went on rolling out the oatcake I was baking.

"And what does it matter if I am ruined?" muttered Mr. Ferrand suddenly in a low wailing tone. "It harms no

one but myself. I have no son to inherit from me, no son, no son, no son."

I felt such a rush of pity, and perhaps some other strange emotion, to my heart that for a moment my eyes dimmed and my hands paused and fumbled. When I could raise my head and look again, I saw that tears stood on his quivering cheeks. His eyes sought mine, very mournfully; by one of those strange trancies of the flesh, which betrays us to acts the will disapproves, I glanced involuntarily towards the open kitchen door, where Chris, his hair tossing, singing at the top of his voice, could be seen galloping round outside astride his whip, making pretence it was a horse. Mr. Ferrand gave a sudden start; his eyes rounded, his mouth gaped, his old face whitened.

"Penninah!" he whispered with a look of awe. "Penninah! The lad is Frank's!"

The blood rushed to my face, and the thoughts flew through my mind. Was it a terrible temptation, or a means of grace, thus to admit my sin? What an inexpressible relief, to share the weight of my secret with another person! But John? Old people were apt to babble. Would not such a confession betray John for the second time? I had to take a decision on the instant; I gasped, then cried out hoarsely:

"No. No!"

Giles sighed and turned away, dropping his chin again on his limp folded hands. In the silence that followed, Chris's voice came to us very clearly.

The next day Giles did not come to The Breck, nor the next, nor the next. I tormented myself much guessing reasons for his absence, and at last sent Chris up to the Hall to ask how Mr. Ferrand did and whether he was ill. Chris came back with his bright face somewhat fallen, to say that the Hall was closed, neither Mr. Ferrand nor old Ralph was there. This troubled me greatly, but there was nothing I could do.

It was two months before we saw old Giles again. He sidled in at last one morning and made for his nook by the

hearth, looking older and shabbier but somehow less beaten than before.

"Signed your composition yet, Mr. Ferrand?" shouted my irrepressible Sam, meeting him in the doorway.

"Sam!" I said, speaking with real anger: "I forbid you to mention that word to Mr. Ferrand again."

"Oh, there is no need to trouble yourself," said Mr. Ferrand with a sniff, shuffling to the fire. "I compounded for my estate in London last Tuesday morning."

For a moment I was dumbfounded. Then Mr. Ferrand looked up at me like a naughty child; he laughed gleefully, and there was a gleam of triumph in his faded eye.

"Well—your composition is your own affair, Mr. Ferrand, and nothing to do with any of us here," I said in a loud firm tone, meeting his glance very strongly.

"Aye—it is my own affair, Penninah. Do not trouble yourself," chuckled Mr. Ferrand. "Nothing to do with you. Nothing at all."

He went on chuckling and tee-heeing to himself in his shrill old tones; Sam in the doorway framed the word "Daft!" to me soundlessly with his lips before he disappeared.

"Do not trouble yourself, Penninah," said Mr. Ferrand in a quiet serious tone when Sam had gone: "My composition is, as you say, entirely my own affair."

We left the matter thus, nor did he ever speak again, either to me or to any other living person, as I judge, of Chris's parentage. But I wondered greatly. I wondered many years before I knew.

A MEDAL IS STRUCK

IT WAS THE first Monday in April, 1647—how well do I remember that day! Thomas was at his book with Mr. Blazet in Bradford, Sam at Isaac Baume's place helping him to wall a gap, Chris playing down by the beck or up at the Hall, I know not, and I myself busy with the house and the dinner. It was the forenoon, very bright and warm and windy, with gentle showers of rain; the grass green, the beck full, the birds all singing; a very sweet and fresh spring day. I was in the kitchen, baking bread; I had just finished the first kneading, and put the dough in the big bowl to rise by the fire, and spread a towel over it to keep it warm, when there came a heavy knocking on the front door.

This nowadays always caused me to start and tremble, for so many things that happened to me had begun with such a knocking—Francis, and the sack—that I feared it. While I was alone in the house I kept the front door barred; I chided myself now for my foolishness, and went to open it. I drew back the bolts with reluctant fingers, and set it wide to prove to myself that I was not afraid.

A strange man stood there. He was a Parliament officer, in a buff-coat which had seen very hard wear, with many things slung on straps about his shoulders, after the manner of fighting men. He was very strong-looking and sturdy, with dark hair growing a little thin on the top of his head; a wound-scar crossed his temple, there were deep lines of fatigue on his haggard face. He bore himself as a man of great experience, who had seen much and endured much and come through it all safe only by his own persistent effort. He looked at me in silence, from fine dark eyes full of weariness and a kind of sorrow; and then I knew who he was. I cried out:

"Husband! John!"

His face changed, he opened his arms to me and I fell on his breast and wept bitterly. All through the hard times, of the siege and the sack and the bitter winter which followed, whatever my private griefs I had never wept in another's presence, never let the children see me discomposed; it was my part to seem strong and assured and let them lean on me, and tenaciously I had striven to play it. But now, in the circle of my husband's strong arms, I wept and wept and could not cease from weeping. He murmured:

"Penninah! Nay, Penninah!"

And he led me to the settle, and we sank down upon it together, my head on his shoulder and my arms about his neck, and he held me close and stroked my hair and kissed my wet cheek, and we mingled our tears, and all our griefs against each other were washed away.

After a time, as it chanced, Chris ran past the window, and came in at the back door and peeped in, looking for me, for I often gave him a piece in his hand to eat, in the middle of the morning. He stood at the door, quite awe-struck at seeing me in the arms of a strange man, weeping.

"It is Christopher," I whispered, and I buried my face in John's shoulder and trembled.

"I know," said John. "I know." He beckoned Chris to him—who came at first timidly, but afterwards skipping, for he had no fear in his heart and loved everyone—and he picked up the child and kissed him gravely, and put back his rich gold hair from his forehead and looked at him, and then set him down gently and bade him run and play, as I was busy. When Chris had gone, after a moment: "He is very like," said John. "Well, I will love him for both your sakes."

By this he meant, I saw, for my sake and Francis's, for after all he had loved Francis in his youth very dearly, and at this I wept again, clinging to him closely and burying my face in his shoulder. I tried to say: "Forgive! Forgive!" but I do not truly know whether I succeeded, for it is not an easy word for a proud woman to say, and moreover,

even in my abasement I could not swear that I repented totally of my sin, for I loved little Christopher as my own soul and could not dream of life without him. Yet I grieved from the depths of my heart that I had wounded John and betrayed him, and perhaps I managed to convey this to his mind, because he began, stumbling and uncertainly, to utter words which I did not at first see the tenor of, but which presently I understood to be self-accusation.

"I was over-eager to wed thee, Penninah," he murmured, and again: "I took thee too promptly at thy word. Thou wast but a child, and with thy father lying dead and thy soft heart broken. . . ."

I saw at last that he had come to blame himself for marrying me so swiftly after my quarrel with Francis. But this great generosity I could not allow, for at the time of our marriage I was completely turned towards John and away from Francis; I acted knowing my mind and of my own free will. I could not speak the name of Francis to him, for I felt that John was still John, there was still the deep reserve in him and he would not be able to endure to have it broken. So I could exclaim only to his self-accusings:

"No! No!" with great vehemence. "No! It was not so!" I told him again, shaking my head very emphatically.

John's face seemed to brighten at this; turning aside from me he said in a stiff tone, speaking very carefully:

"What is done is done—it is past and God knows we have paid for it. Let us put it away and lead a new life together in peace."

I guessed he had made up these words in his mind as he came along, or perhaps had spent many months in torment framing them. I laid my hand in his, and I said:

"Let it be so, John, with all my heart."

He turned to me, and we kissed very strongly, and from that time onwards we were truly husband and wife.

After a while, when our hearts had calmed a little and the first storm of my weeping had died down, I rose and began to minister to John, taking off his musket and powder horn and his buff-coat, and lighting a fire in the houseplace,

which we had not had for long enough, and setting food and drink before him. I saw him looking about at his house—for it was *his* house, I remembered—with a bewildered air; I was so used to its bareness that I had forgotten it, but now I saw it through his eyes, and grieved for such a poor welcome to his home-coming. While he ate I told him about the sack of The Breck, and about all our labours and sufferings since; I saw the dark colour rise slowly to his cheek, and knew he reproached himself for having sent nothing for our support all these long four years. But he had had no notion of the harsh road we were travelling, any more than I had known of his sufferings from fever and hunger, cold and danger. To distract him from this shame he felt, I told him of two or three small repairs about the house which needed attention; he turned to his tools at once and put them right, working with so much more skill and strength than little Sam that it was a joy to watch him. I held a candle for him, just as I used when we were children together. He made no effusive speeches of affection to me, nor offered many caresses, yet I saw he was happy—he hummed a psalm, softly, below his breath, and his face already looked less strained and haggard. He chopped wood and drew water, too, though amazed that I had none to do it for me; the difference between a man's strength and a woman's, the difference between being the strongest person in the house and being regarded as a woman who ought not to do heavy work, was very pleasantly made clear to me. I felt as if, after struggling for years through a storm of rain and wind, I had reached a warm snug room and lay on a soft mattress. I said as much to John, who gave his old grim smile.

"I have never been likened to a feather bed before," said he. When I denied this meaning, he said with a laugh: "Nay—a change is not unpleasant."

Then the boys came home from their work, and fell upon him with cries of joy and thankfulness. John looked them up and down, and turned them about, and stroked their heads, smiling all the while and marvelling how they

had grown. I own I felt some pride in them; they were fine well-grown lads, healthy in colour, happy in look, and when I reflected that they had been fed and clothed for four years without John's aid, I could not imagine how I had achieved it. Then Sam brought down Sir Thomas's boots to show his father, which John handled very gently and lovingly, I thought, although he smiled; and then Sam would have him go up to the loom-chamber, and we told him the story of the one rough sack of wool which was all Isaac Baume had left in the house, and how our looms had escaped destruction; and then we all went out to the laithe, and we told him the story of the stolen cows—it was strange to see his horse in the stable; we had not seen a horse at The Breck for nearly four years. Then we went to the patch of oats, and Sam wished his father to admire how straightly they were sown, and we told him how we had scooped up the meal from the lane with our hands, and had cooked it in the holed pan which was all the soldiers had left us. He exclaimed in amazement, looking from one to the other of us and marvelling. It seemed to me that all this concerned Sam, and though Thomas was the least jealous of any lad I ever met, still I did not wish him to be overshadowed by his brother. So as we climbed the slope up to The Breck, John and I arm in arm and the children running round us, I said:

"Thomas has kept his Latin, and begun Greek and Hebrew too."

"Then he can read this inscription for me," said John, smiling; and he put his fingers in an inner pocket and drew out a fine gold coin, and held it out in the palm of his hand.

The children crowded close to see, and Chris turned and held out his arms to me, which meant that he wanted to be lifted, and I took him up in the crook of my arm, and we all bent to John's hand. The coin, I saw now, was not a coin but a medal, with a ring at the head by which to suspend it, and a blue ribbon.

"Read it, Thomas," I urged him.

"Across the centre field, it says M E R U I S T I,"

said Thomas in his clear high voice. "Which means: *Thou hast deserved well*. Round the rim, the legend is: P O S T H A C M E L I O R A, which means: *after this, better things—or better times, perhaps*."

"Who gave it you, Father?" asked Sam, awestruck.

"My General," said John. He turned the medal over; there was a bust engraved of Sir Thomas Fairfax, with the legend: T H O. F A I R F A X. M I L E S. M I L I T. P A R L. D U X. G E N.

"*Thomas Fairfax, miles, militum parliamentanorum dux generalis*," read Thomas. "Thomas Fairfax, soldier, lord general of the parliamentary soldiers. Or it might be *militum parlamenti*, of the parliament's soldiers."

"It is very well," approved John, laying his hand on Thomas's shoulder.

"Tell us all your adventures in battles, Father!" cried Sam, turning a somersault on the grass. Chris struggled down from my arms and tried to copy him, rolling over very earnestly to himself, but very comically to us, so that we all laughed together.

"Why, son Sam," said John pleasantly, when we were all sitting together round the fire: "I confess I know not where to begin about my General's battles."

"Begin with Marston Moor," suggested Thomas, and Sam nodded eagerly and pressed up to his father.

We sat listening, enthralled, till it was far past the boys' bed-time, and little Chris was long since asleep on my lap. "It is time for bed, lads," I urged once or twice, but they cried: "No, no, Mother! Not yet! Not to-night!" and I had not the heart to command them.

At last John said: "I will show you one more thing, and then it must be bed-time," and Thomas and Sam reluctantly agreed, and John undid one of his packs, and brought out a piece of parchment. "Read it, Thomas," he said.

"*Sir Thomas Fairfax, Knight*," read Thomas very proudly: "*Commander-in-Chief of all the Land-Forces under the pay of the Parliament, within the Kingdom of England, Dominion of Wales, and in the Islands of Guernsey and Jersey, in order to the security*

and peace of the Kingdom, reducing of Ireland, and disbanding such as shall be thought fit by both Houses."

Sam clapped his hands and jumped in his chair for excitement.

"*I do hereby acknowledge,*" continued Thomas, "*that Mr. John Thorpe hath deservedly received a medal from the Parliament and City of London, in remembrance of his faithful Service under my command in the year 1645. The signature,*" concluded Thomas: "*is T. Fairfax.*"

"There will be another for me for 1647, coming presently," said John.

"Why does it say the Parliament and City of London gave you the medal, Father?" asked Sam.

"They had the medal struck, and paid for the gold," explained John, "but my General said who were to receive the medals. Now, lads, to bed with you!"

Their heads were buzzing so with battles and medals and certificates that they went off in silence, their eyes quite dazed; John took their faces between his hands and kissed them very tenderly, and bent and did the like with Chris as he lay fast asleep in my arms.

While I was busy with Chris upstairs, I heard John moving about below, looking out at the weather, barring the door, and performing all such last small duties as householders use at night, which I had perforce done myself these last four years; it was very comfortable to hear him. When I came down, he was sitting by the fire, gazing into its embers thoughtfully; the look of peace on his tired face showed me what it meant to him to be here, quiet and at ease by his own fireside, and I was moved by it. I picked up the gold medal which lay on the table, and turned it over, examining it, and John came and stood behind me and looked over my shoulder.

"*Meruisti*—thou hast deserved well, husband," I said to him: "Canst now take an honourable leisure."

"Thou too, Penninah," said John gruffly. "Thou hast been the pillar of this house these past four years; now I will ease the burden from thy shoulder."

“AFTER THIS A BETTER DAY”

YES, JOHN AND I were then truly husband and wife, close to each other, and loving each other dearly, not with the rapture of youth, but with the strong firm love of those who have been tried in the fires of life, who have seen much sorrow and know that life doth not keep the level of perfection, but yet hath many good and noble moments all the same. By day our love was a warmth on the hearth and a strong tower of protection about our children; at night we lay awake long hours together, telling over all our griefs and joys. I told over and over my pains and hardships, the siege and the sack and the time of our penury, finding ever some fresh detail which John had not heard; John told of cold and hunger and fever, rain and wind and snow, battles and marchings and unremitting toil, danger on the field and intrigue in the council, Sir Thomas at the bar of the House, at City banquets, in the cold dim light of an early morning surprise, and over the sickbed of his so often ailing little Moll. We told and re-told, and suffered it all again in the telling; and then we made all well with love.

John had brought, besides considerable arrears of his pay, a hundred pounds in gold home with him—a great sum, paid to him, he told me proudly, for extra service in the Army, by the General’s especial command. With this he set everything moving at The Breck again. He bought seed and tools and yarn and beasts; again we saw sheep cropping our slopes marked in reddle with The Breck brand; again our ground was sown with peas and parsnips, carrots and mustard, and a great field of oats; again we had cows and fowls, and a maid in the kitchen, and the looms clacking upstairs. John paid Will back his loan, and he lent money

to Isaac Baume and took no interest, and he made an inventory of all that was stolen in the sack, both at The Breck and at all the other houses round.

"My General would find it intolerable," he said, "that we in Bradford should lose thus by our devotion to the cause."

He disentangled the school finances, too, and set it going again with a good master.

There was a sureness and confidence in all John's acts now that had never shown in him before; he had seen so much, been with so many great personages, that doubtless Bradford seemed a small affair to him—not that he despised it, but simply knew that he could well manage all that, and was not afraid. He bought back much of our furniture, which had found its way into neighbouring Royalist houses; the Royalists were glad to sell, as they had sequestration fines to pay, and since John had much to do with assessing these local fines, they were eager to please him. Sometimes they even offered him our own furniture as presents, pretending they were sorry for the injustice done; but this John always refused, paying instead a just price, very coldly and stiffly. Some of our things he never found; alas, our cradle was one of these. I was very sorry, because I should soon have a use for it again—but then I reflected that it was as well; this new child of ours should belong not to the past, with its strifes and blunders, but to the future, to this new time of freedom and peace.

The cloth trade was still very bad, for though all the soldiers were coming back from the wars now very shabby, and everyone wanted clothes—we ourselves were quite in rags—no one had any money to pay for them. But by the end of the year this was partly remedied, for money was sent down from Parliament to pay the soldiers' arrears, so they had something to spend, and trade began slowly to move again. John was one of the committee who had to settle this matter, get the officers' accounts allowed and arrears for army service paid, and he was busy for months, preparing accounts and visiting local captains. I remember just after Christmas this year there was a very big meeting

at Bradford of this committee; the people in Bradford stared in amazement to see their streets so brisk and busy with all these officers and men, for what with the war and the plague, Bradford had been very quiet for long enough. It seemed the committee and some of the greatest of the officers were to dine together, and I asked John if he wished to invite them to The Breck. But he would not, for I was near my time and he did not wish to put the toil of it on me; so they dined at an inn in the town instead.

I wished greatly that my child might be a girl, for I thought her companionship would be sweet to me, and very agreeable to her father; but the Lord who knoweth all things ordained it otherwise. He gave us our little Abraham, the cleverest of all our children, who will, Thomas and Sam both tell me, bring great lustre on our family name by his mathematical abilities. He was ever a sweet, gracious child, strongly resembling Thomas in look and air, being dark, with a high forehead; but he had more piercing eyes than Thomas, and there was a half-smile about his lips and a strength in his face, as if he knew some great secret and lived by it—which indeed I suppose he did, for his understanding of the stars, his making of instruments to plot their course, is to me a thing very strange and wonderful. He had from childhood the most exquisite neat penmanship, and could draw figures and diagrams of singular beauty; indeed his little fingers were the nimblest, most delicate, most skilful that I ever saw, both with a pen and every other kind of tool. As a child he loved to add columns of figures for John; indeed sometimes of an evening when John came in and sat by the hearth and wished to play with the child, the greatest pleasure he could give him was to set him sums to do in his head. In health Abraham has never been so strong as the other three; I suppose I had eaten too little for so long before I conceived him that he suffered by it. He was ever more suited to the great world than Sam or even Thomas, though it is hard to say why; whether it was because of this that he and Chris were very friendly, or whether he learned his ways from Chris, they two being

nearer in age to each other than to their elders, I do not know.

The time of Abraham's birth was a very bright time in my life. We had peace, we were all well; we were at home together, all troubles past, all sins forgiven. True, the King escaped—but he was caught again; and there were some slight dissensions between the Army and the Parliament, and also some discomforts in the Army itself, which John frowned over; but these seemed little or nothing, and would soon disappear, I thought, when the nation came to a settlement. In quiet and confidence, with the war over and a settlement in sight, we had a merry Christening feast for my last child. We asked Will and Eliza over from Adel, and the Baumes, and Mrs. Hodgson (the Captain not being returned yet from the war, but still fighting under Colonel Lambert); and I asked old Giles Ferrand—John frowned a little when he heard this, but did not deny me; Giles however smiled and made me a bow but declined politely. Will baptized our babe very solemnly and well, and then we had such a dinner! Goose and beef and fowl and mutton and ham—Sam ate and ate till he nigh burst himself, being a growing lad, with a sharp appetite for years unsatisfied, so that I could not blame him. Then after we had eaten our fill, John rose up, rather pale and smiling strangely, and said:

"Friends: it is not our way to make profane toasts an excuse for indulgence, as the Royalists do, but this day I think we may drink a health."

Then he moved from the table, and strode over to the mantel, where Sir Thomas's boots stood, one each side; and he poured sack into one of the boots and said:

"I give you the Lord General of the Parliament's Forces, who under God's Providence has freed this land."

Then he drank the toast from the boot, and passed it round, and we all drank, smiling a little at the boot and Sam's excited face, but in sober gladness and thankfulness to Almighty God, and gratitude to Sir Thomas Fairfax.

"Let us pray," said Will suddenly, and we all stood up and bowed our heads.

"We thank Thee, Lord," said Will, "for this Thy great mercy of peace which Thou hast granted us; we bring before Thee in grateful remembrance those who are absent from us, still engaged in Thy service, those who have suffered therein in mind, body or estate, those who will nevermore return. Grant this child peace in his time, O Lord," said Will, stretching out his hand to where Abraham lay in his new cradle, "and grant that he may never forget Thee, the source of all good things, nor those who, under Thee, secured this blessing of peace for our land."

We said "Amen," and sat down, much moved, and not able to speak for a moment. Then Isaac Baume began to ask to see John's medal again, which indeed none in our neighbourhood could see often enough. John, colouring a little and lowering his eyes, drew it out of his pocket—I had made a small case for it of stitched leather, and he carried it on him always—and let it go round the table, hand to hand, Thomas translating for those who needed it.

"*Post hac meliora*," said Isaac Baume, mispronouncing the words, poor man, very vilely. "*Post hac meliora*," he repeated, and from sheer joy he wept openly: "After this a better day."

"Amen," said John, very firm and strong, and I echoed him with all my heart: after this a better day.

V

IS IT PEACE?

GILES FERRAND GROWS A BEARD

IN THE SPRING after Abraham's birth the Royalists rose up again, and there was bitter fighting in Wales and Kent. But this did not trouble me much, apart from a general compassion for the suffering caused, for I felt sure that Lord Fairfax (as he now became, old Ferdinando dying), and Lieutenant-General Cromwell, would soon dispose of it. It amazed me, however, to hear rumours that the Scots were about to invade England on the King's behalf; I could not understand this.

"But it is not four years since the Scots fought for *us* at Marston Moor, John," I objected to my husband. "Last year they surrendered the King to Parliament. And what of the Solemn League and Covenant? Are we not Presbyterians now, as they?"

"Why, they think we are not. They are fighting to deliver the King from sectaries," said John gloomily. "If you would read your brother's pamphlet, you would have a better understanding of the matter."

I made a slight grimace, at which John smiled, for indeed we both found dear Will nowadays rather over-pompous, over-given to theological choler, and his sermons apt to be tedious, though always honest and well-meaning.

"'Tis not of his own composing," said John reassuringly, handing me the pamphlet from the window-sill. "There are some forty West Riding ministers have signed it."

I sighed but dutifully took the pamphlet, which I had hitherto avoided reading in spite of Will's hints on the matter, and at odd moments during the next few days I studied it. It seemed these forty ministers were eagerly awaiting the proper setting-up of Presbyterian Church

government in Yorkshire—in Lancashire the Presbyterian system was already quite established. Meanwhile, said these ministers, of whom our Will was one, they wished to make a serious and emphatic protest against the soul-damning errors, heresies and blasphemies, which of late had come in like a flood upon our nation. They gave the names of some of these heresies, but in truth I had never heard of most of them, and was obliged to seek enlightenment from John.

"Why, in truth," said he, "in some of our regiments now there are almost as many kinds of Independents as there are Corporals. Any man who has a turn for talking makes himself into a preacher, collects a half-dozen soldiers about him, and calls himself *one of the gifted brethren* and his audience a *gathered Church*. Your Sarah's Denton is one such: a loud-mouthed bawling fellow with a great conceit of himself."

"But where is the harm, John?" I asked, puzzled by his rancorous tone.

"These *gathered Churches*, said John, had no connection with any other Church; each congregation, however small, ruled itself and made its own laws—it was this independence which made the Presbyterians so wrathful, including these forty ministers and Will.

"You fought for freedom in religion, John," said I.

"We fought for a just and free religious order," said John sternly. "But these men wish for no order at all."

"But you cannot oppress them, John," I argued.

"Oppress them! They are not likely to be oppressed with Cromwell at their head," said he. "But hearken, Penninah, before you waste your pity on them—these sectaries, who clamour so for total freedom, are the bitterest of all against the Royalists; they demand execution where others would agree to imprisonment or composition, and scoff at all notion of treating with the King, calling him the Chief Delinquent and the Man of Blood. Not that I hold a brief for the King," concluded John gruffly: "for of all men living he is surely the least to be trusted and the most forsworn."

I sighed and felt uneasy and perplexed; all this seemed

so confused and confusing, unlike the old conflict between right and wrong, the oppressed and the oppressor, the Puritan and the Royalist, which was so clear and well-marked in the war.

"Nevertheless I do not think you should oppress the sectaries," said I. "Nor," I added, "should the sectaries oppress."

John laughed. "Well, you are a woman, Penninah," said he, "and may support both sides at once if you wish."

"I support the right wherever I find it," said I.

"Stubborn!" said John, laughing and putting his hand on my shoulder, for I was feeding my youngest child. "But for my part," he added in a sober tone, "I am a man and have to take a side, and I shall not side with Cromwell."

"What does Lord Fairfax think of all this?" said I.

"Why," said John, "he is like you, Penninah; he supports the right wherever he finds it."

"Well, then," I argued. "He will find a way through this without taking sides."

"God grant it prove so," said John very soberly.

The Scots burst down into England in the summer, and Cromwell came north and marched about in Yorkshire, expecting they would come down into Lancashire, then cross the hills along the River Aire and go towards York, as it has been the habit of marauding Scots throughout the centuries to do. I was terrified lest John should go and fight again, especially when we heard that Captain Hodgson was with Lambert's part of the Army, but he did not; he shook his head and said that Cromwell had brought the Scots on us, so he should leave the Scots to Cromwell.

"To do Noll justice," said he, "I believe I may leave him the Scots without any fear."

I hoped very earnestly that we should not have another great battle in Yorkshire, and my hope was fulfilled; the Scots were in Lancashire when Cromwell caught them, and he cut their army in half and chased them both north and south and routed them utterly and took all their commanders prisoner and followed them up into Scotland. So

now, I thought, we shall have peace surely; and I set myself very gladly to preparing sheets and napkins and body-linen and stockings for Thomas, who next year, if all went well, was to go to Cambridge, to Clare Hall. Since we had no store left out of which I might furnish him, I began my preparations in good time, so as to spread the expenditure.

Old Giles Ferrand kept away from The Breck at first after John's return, but after a time he crept back again, and took up a warm place on our hearth—though it was now in the houseplace, not by the kitchen fire. John was apt to snort a little and be stiff with him, so that I asked him once whether he preferred that I should give his uncle a hint to stay away. He hesitated a moment, and then said no—as Giles had paid his fine, taken the oath and made his composition, he said, there was no reason to exclude him from the company of honest men; and after that he was less abrupt, though still not very pleasant. He disliked particularly to see Mr. Ferrand playing with Chris, and sometimes I was hard put to it to prevent him doing so, though it grew easier when Chris began, as he did this year, to go to school. Old Giles did not now watch me baking and washing and scouring, for we had maids and boys for this again, but as I stitched and patched and knitted—with a man and three young boys and an infant to care for, there was always much sewing to do—he followed my needle with his faded eyes, very intently. One day he timidly and with a precatory laugh, fumbling at his doublet, asked me to let him on a button. I took the doublet off to do so, and found it worn and out-at-elbows—I was ashamed not to have noticed this before. His shirt, too, was roughly patched and, to say truth, somewhat dirty. I scolded him a little, mended his doublet and urged him to buy a new one; he smiled timidly again and said he would do so, but not, perhaps, just yet. Next week I chanced to notice that he wore the same shirt, dirtier by the wear of a se'nnight. It came about that at The Breck we washed and mended for Mr. Ferrand and his man Ralph, and as they grew shabbier, I fitted them up with the cast-off garments of

John and the lads. Perhaps I even cast these off a little sooner than was necessary on that account; Sam, who was grown a great lad all of a sudden, complained in jest that when he wanted a clean shirt to go to market in, he had to go to Holroyd Hall to find one. John frowned a little over this, and in general when he saw his uncle by our hearth his expression was that of a man who has stumbled over somebody else's dog in his own house, but he made no open reproof to me, nor did he sulk with me about it, and in time he grew used to the old man's presence, and forgot his grievance against him.

It seemed to me that Mr. Ferrand must be very poorly off nowadays, to wear our clothes and eat our bread—as he did, though secretly; I gave him a cup of broth and a piece of oven cake hot from our oven many a time, though he would never sit to our table—and I wished John to advise him about his affairs. John frowned and set his mouth at first when I asked him, but a few days later I heard him proffering his services to his uncle in the matter of selling the wool from his few poor sheep. This would have been a good beginning, I thought, and I was pleased. But old Mr. Ferrand rejected John's offers sharply; striking his stick on the ground, and with a high colour in his faded face, he cried:

"I will manage my own sheep while I live, John Thorpe!"

"You are right, Uncle," said John quickly, with that stolid air he used to conceal vexation. He would not broach the matter again, nor did I like to urge him too strongly.

In this year of which I am thinking, about the autumn time old Giles began to mumble and grumble about what was to happen to King Charles. This was a matter to which I had not given much, or indeed any, thought, and I asked the old man curiously what he considered would be the future of his King, to whom, poor man, he was still greatly devoted. To my amazement he actually appeared to fear for Charles's life. I laughed, and told him such fears were ludicrous.

"Why so?" grumbled Giles. "They killed Lord Strafford, they killed Archbishop Laud; since they have raised their

eyes so high, they may raise them a little higher, and get as far as Royalty."

"Killed Archbishop Laud!" I exclaimed. "Nonsense, Uncle!"

"It is not nonsense, Penninah," said Giles peevishly, halting his full spoon in the air to argue with me, so that I watched his uncertain hand somewhat anxiously. "Your friends tried Archbishop Laud, and executed him, long ago. Now when was it? Well, as I remember it was some time before that accursed battle of Naseby, for which your Fairfax was paid a diamond locket."

This silenced me and made me thoughtful; I had felt hatred enough for Laud, certainly, for all the miseries he had brought on my family, yet I could not fancy executing a minister of God in cold blood, even one so cruelly mistaken, and I was vexed to think I had missed this transaction, which once would have meant so much to me. When I asked John about the matter he confirmed Giles's tale, and when I went further and enquired about the King, he spoke with an impatient irritation which betrayed his own trouble in the matter. The King, he said, would be deposed, for it was impossible to treat with him; while he negotiated with you, you could be sure he treated with your enemy; letters of his, captured on the battlefields, showed him so full of lies and double-dealing that even Lord Fairfax—"who is the last man in the world to believe evil of another," said John---had now despaired of him.

"But it is not the King who troubles me," concluded John.

"What troubles you then?" I asked quickly.

John hesitated. "Oh, this and that," he said. "And the Army is twenty-six weeks in arrears with pay."

I opened my lips for another question, but John went away abruptly.

I was so busy coaxing my little Abraham through his teething, and sewing for Thomas, and listening to Sam's market tales, and helping Chris with his school-work---alas, he was no scholar; his large round straggling writing, much blotted and very ill spelled, brought a sad smile to my lips,

'twas so like his father's—I was so busy with all this, and with re-stocking The Breck and clothing John very warmly against the cold, for he was subject to rheumatic aches since his campaigns, that in spite of old Giles I did not take much notice of public events at that time, or puzzle my head over King and Parliament and Army, thinking that now we had peace. I could see that John was a little uneasy, but I put it down to his absence from Lord Fairfax after so many years' close association. But then one cold December day, a dreary dark still day, with the sky lowering sombrely over the hills, suddenly in the middle of the afternoon our door was thrown open and John strode rapidly in, and crossed the room without a word and made for the stairs. It was Leeds Market Day, and I did not expect him back till night; besides, there was a look on his face, dark and tormented, such as I had not seen there before since he came home. Alarmed, I ran to him.

"What is it, John? Tell me," I begged, laying my hand urgently on his arm.

"There has been a purge of Parliament," he said. "Forty-one members have been unlawfully excluded."

"Have the Royalists started all over again?" I cried; for this was the same kind of meddling with our liberties which had started the war.

"It is not the Royalists," said John gruffly, not looking at me. "It is our own fanatical Army men."

He put my hand aside, though not unkindly, and went straight up to our chamber and closed the door.

I sat for a while, stunned, all my feelings suspended, and then I went upstairs and very quietly set back our chamber door. John was on his knees by the bed, deep in prayer. There was such an intensity of grief and disappointment in the very lines of his body, his bowed head, the strain of his doublet across his shoulders, the tight grip of his clasped hands, that I could not break in upon him; I stole away quietly, sick at heart.

"Are we to have no peace?" I asked myself. "Why cannot we have peace, after this misery of war?"

Well, I have lived through peace and war, and I know now how they go. In peace, because of some weakness or excess in the hearts of men, some grievance becomes intolerable, not to be borne—either old rights are withheld, or new and better rights are refused to be granted. There is argument, contention, dissension, division; at length it seems as though the matter cannot be settled peacefully, because of the unreasonableness of the enemy, which blocks the way to human betterment; then comes the bitter arbitrament of war. Then there comes victory; and then the hope of peace. But I believe the most difficult thing in all the world is to make a good peace.

For consider the conditions in which peace is made. There are the opponents whom you have just defeated, to whom it is necessary, if the peace is to be lasting—since after all you must needs go on living together—to be fair and kindly, within the limits of the change you have fought to accomplish; yet bitter feelings prevent you from offering justice, and they from receiving it. There are those within your own party who wish the change you have fought for to be far more sweeping, so that your late opponents cannot certainly, and you yourself can hardly, live within its frame. Against these latter it is very difficult to contend, for they can easily make you appear, even to yourself, as a traitor to the cause for which you fought. To steer a straight course between these two parties, your enemies and your fanatic friends, is a hard matter; insensibly you incline to one side or the other, and thus become one of the things you took up arms to fight. (For if you incline to the Royalists, then you become Royalist; but if you incline to their bitter opponents, then you become oppressors even as the Royalists were oppressors, though called by another name.) There is always the Army, too, which since it has done the fighting expects to do the governing, though fighting does not fit for governing, but rather the reverse. If the Army has a grudge as well, as of arrears unpaid or petitions unheard, it is a very potent source of mischief, for soldiers have the arms with which to enforce their claims. Thus the circum-

stances at the close of any war are so difficult that they require the continued exercise of the highest powers of man, while at the close of any war both these highest powers are out of practice from disuse, and men are very weary and therefore apt to be impatient at a long continuance of any exercise.

Yes, peace is more difficult than war; for war allows the excesses of the human heart full play, while peace requires us to control them. And before we have managed to do so, the time for making peace has slipped away.

So it was with us, at least. Without, there were the Royalists; within, the fanatics; looming always in the background, the Army. All of these, and the moderate party too, were mortal, all subject to the imperfections of the human heart; some so impatient to secure their own desires, as to become too careless of the means adopted to secure them. After the fanatics on our side took the same unlawful means to their ends as our enemies did to theirs, after this purge of Parliament, when Colonels of the Army stood at the door of the House and kept representatives of the people from entering to do the task for which the people had elected them, after this we never had any real peace—nor did we deserve it. John, I think, saw it then; I only perceived it slowly, as the consequences of the act emerged, and, in default of repentance and reform, drove our affairs continually from bad to worse.

The Army had thus purged the Parliament because it desired the trial of King Charles, and knew there was a majority at Westminster determined against such severe courses. Lord Fairfax knew nothing of the purge till it was over; he had long been uneasy at the Army's actions and wanting to lay down his commission as Lord General, but was as constantly urged to retain it, lest the Army's excesses should grow worse without his care. The soldiers had a great respect for his person, and could at least, he thought, be kept from actual violence while he was at their head. So he stayed on, and perhaps by this very love of peace and order lent their deeds more countenance than he should.

A Commission was appointed by the Parliament to bring the King to trial; Lord Fairfax, again, accepted nomination upon it, hoping to moderate its course. But after the first two or three sittings he perceived that the most of its members meant, not merely to try, but to execute the King; as soon as he found this, he stayed away.

All this I heard many years later, when we visited Lord Fairfax in his old age. We heard then too of the King's trial, of how when Lord Fairfax's name was called in court as one of the Commissioners, a voice cried out:

"He has more wit than to be here!"

And of how, when the King was required to answer to the charge in the name of the Parliament and good people of England, the same voice cried out:

"No, nor half the people!"

There was a stir in the court, and an officer went up into the gallery whence the voice came, to demand silence. But he stuttered and blushed and backed away when he got there, for the voice was the voice of Lady Fairfax.

I always smile to myself, in spite of the sadness of the occasion, when I think of this; the action is so in keeping with the character of Lady Fairfax—I can see her, hear her, in the performing of it.

But if Lord Fairfax stayed away, Cromwell pushed the trial on, and so Charles Stuart, the Chief Delinquent, the Man of Blood, was tried and condemned and executed.

John, in later days, talked much of this matter to Lord Fairfax, who said he had deeply considered an armed attempt to stop the execution—his own regiment would have followed him anywhere on any errand—but then he saw such an attempt would merely cause useless bloodshed, and desisted. He exerted himself to get the execution postponed, hoping that time would calm the fanatics' passions, but his attempts were fruitless; the act which he abhorred took place.

Well, I have read and heard much of Charles's execution. I have read psalms of joy, from the fanatics of our party; I have read, later, howls of execration, exaltation of the King

into a blessed martyr, from the party of the King's son. I have read about Charles's blue silk shirt, and his princely demeanour, and his Bishop, and his Bible; I have seen the place of his execution; I have heard how Lord Fairfax, going to transact Army business in Whitehall that day, met the King's coffin covered with a black pall, and started and stammered at the sight. But to me, mention of the King's execution brings to my mind first of all this picture: old Giles sobbing with his head down on the kitchen table, and then lifting his faded old face to me with the tears thick on it, and wailing:

"I will never cut hair or beard again! They have killed my King. I will never cut my beard again, Penninah!" wept the old man bitterly, over and over, and would not be comforted.

A few months later, Parliament enacted that England should henceforth be a Commonwealth, a Free State, governed by Parliament alone, without any King or House of Lords. This act should have been the crown of all our hopes, a noble triumph of freedom, the beginning of a better life; but for me it was spoiled—it seemed drenched in the King's unnecessary blood and old Giles's tears.

LORD FAIRFAX RESIGNS HIS COMMISSION

VIOLENCE BREEDS VIOLENCE; set an example, and it will be followed.

Cromwell and his friends beleaguered King Charles for not being a republican; barely a quarter of the year had passed before some parts of the army violently mutinied against Cromwell and his friends for not being republican enough. These men, "Levellers" they called them, desired to have perfect freedom, not only in politics but in goods; they wished the fruits of the earth to be shared freely by all men, thus putting all men on a common level. I own I had a kindly feeling for them, for it has ever seemed to me a bitter injustice that some of us should lie soft and others so uneasily; nay, I have even at times been hard put to it to reconcile these earthly inequalities with the excellent goodness of God. Besides, since we had taken up arms to free ourselves from persecution, we could hardly blame these men for taking up arms in a similar cause. To me it has always seemed that a man's beliefs are between himself and God, and he hath a right to live after those beliefs if he chooses, provided always that he does not break the peace. But John did not see these Levellers so; he knew the men and disliked them as contentious, brawling, fanatical peace-breakers; moreover, I have noticed that mutiny in an army is regarded by all men, though not by women, as inexcusable, deserving only to be put down instantly and punished with death. (Few women, I think, believe in their hearts that any crime short of murder deserves death.) At this time the Royalists had stirred up the Irish to revolt, and Cromwell was to take an army into Ireland to crush them;

the men being tired of service, lots were drawn to decide which regiments were to go there, and some of those drawn were not very contented; then the doctrines of these Levellers, and pamphlets circulated amongst them called *England's New Chains Discovered*, hitting at the Parliament, worked on their discontent and struck it into flame. The opponents you have defeated, the friends you cannot satisfy, the Army looming, ready to either hand—the forces preventing peace after victory are ever the same.

This mutiny blew up in London first, and a trooper was shot for it in Paul's Churchyard; then it broke out again somewhere in the southern parts of England, Oxfordshire I think. Fairfax and Cromwell hurried thither, and caught the mutineers resting, their horses out to grass, in a little village with a church and a bridge, sloping up a steep hill. The mutineers were tried by court-martial and condemned to be shot, and three of them were shot to death, the others being placed on the leads of the church to see. Two of them, as I remember, expressed repentance, but the third made not the least acknowledgement of error; he pulled off his doublet himself, and himself bade the soldiers appointed to shoot, to do their duty, looking them in the face till they gave fire, without any show of fear. The next one brought out expressed his penitence, and Lord Fairfax pardoned him, and no more were shot, but only scolded and reduced. But this pardon did not help our poor Sarah, indeed it made her more bitter, I believe; for her Denton was the last of the three Corporals shot, the one who stripped his own doublet and stared unwinkingly at the soldiers as they fired.

"Black Tom shot him to death!" wailed Sarah to me, when she had heard the sad story from one of the husband's friends who returned wounded to Bradford later that year. "Why didn't he begin pardoning 'em one sooner? Why did he shoot my lad? Him that's fought all these seven years—Black Tom knew him well enough! Why pardon the next man and shoot my lad?"

I could find nothing to say to this; for it seemed to me that very likely that *next man* owed his pardon and his

life to Sarah's husband. I imagined Lord Fairfax standing by with a stern set face, hating the executions but setting a check on the natural workings of his heart. And then one of the doomed Corporals is Denton, a Yorkshireman, a man of Bradford, who had fought for the cause, as Sarah said, for seven long years. John had often told me how tender-hearted the Lord General was to those of Yorkshire birth; when he went over the General's accounts, he said, with him each week, he was often moved to smile at the many entries of charities to Yorkshire folk he found there. *To an old Yorkshire man, four pence, John would read out: to a poor woman from Yorkshire, two shillings.* The General would sit through this with his colour a little raised and his eyelids down; and at the end, sometimes he would pass these entries stiffly by without a word, sometimes he would laugh and say: "Shouldst s-s-sew up my pockets, Jack, when thou hear'st a voice from Yorksh-sh-ire." And this same General saw Denton brought out and shot; his hearty Yorkshire voice would sound no more. Yes, I think the next Corporal owed his life to Denton. But I did not say this to Sarah; it could bring her no lightening of her pain, but rather make it a heavier burden.

I remember as I left her cottage, where I had been to console her when we heard the news, it was just the time when the Grammar School loosed, and as I walked down Church Bank and crossed the beck I saw my Chris at play. He was running along the top of a somewhat dilapidated wall, five or six feet high, which bounded the school; when he reached the space of the gateway he sprang in the air, so that my heart turned over to see him; however, he came down nimbly on the wall the other side. His head was up, his red-gold hair tossing, he was laughing and somehow sparkling all over his face, and a dozen or so other lads were running along below him, shouting up admiringly. One or two tried to imitate him, climbed up the wall and ran along bravely enough, and even hurled themselves across the gateway, but they wavered and scrambled, none was so sure-footed, so full of grace and fire, as he. Chris

saw me from afar, for his eyes were as keen as a hawk's; he waved with a gallant air but he did not come to me, continuing along the wall round the corner of the school, instead.

I was half-way up Little Holroyd Lane when he overtook me, coming springing up the hill with his straight slender body poised on a light and daring foot. He thrust his hand into the crook of my arm and then took it away again, which was very like my Chris, for he was always something wild in his ways and liked not to be chained down. He could not endure caresses, save from me, and withdrew himself courteously but decidedly if any dared to lay a hand—and many did, for its rich gold drew them—on his head. For this reason he was at odds with Sarah, who would have doted on him if he would have let her. He walked along beside me contentedly now, however, kicking up the fallen leaves in a manner very detrimental to his shoes—for which I did not rebuke him—and whistling in a very clear pure tone.

"What hast learned at school to-day, Chris?" said I, playing the mother.

"Oh—well—I don't know. Arithmetic, I think," said Chris. "No—'twas some kind of Latin."

"Chris, Chris!" said I, laughing.

Chris laughed too, a clear golden peal; then, suddenly seeing one of the Little Holroyd sheepdogs, a big curly grey-and-white animal with long hair in its eyes, peering through the hedge at us, he shouted and sprang towards it; in another minute the pair were rushing up and down the field, the big dog barking and Chris laughing, both very joyously. My son returned to me again at the turning into The Breck, flushed and breathless, and at once began an account, very serious and detailed, of a marbles match he had played that day in the forenoon, in which he had won four marbles. He took them out of his pocket to show me.

"But there are only three, Chris," said I.

He flushed and bounded off into the laithe—to see the milking, he called over his shoulder, but truly, as I guessed,

to escape telling me he had given away the fourth marble. He had a very generous, tender heart, and was apt to give away his possessions—too apt, Sam said once, scolding him—to those less favoured by fortune than himself.

“Charity is a duty,” said Thomas gravely, defending him.

“Aye,” said Sam: “but there’s reason in all things, Thomas.”

At both these remarks Chris screwed up his nose in a derisive grimace, as if he had tasted a sour apple.

Our two elder lads were growing fast towards manhood. Thomas was now a tall dark serious youth; he had gained strength and put on weight during the last two years, and had a fine earnest young face, not handsome, but not without dignity. He went off to Cambridge this year or early next, I do not quite remember; he became a student at Clare Hall under David, and David was very well pleased indeed with his progress. He studied with far more than ordinary industry, said David, and had a capacious soul, of admirable natural parts, which if well cultivated would make him into a very accurate and wide-ranging scholar. John took great pride and joy in Thomas, who was—as I realised now though I had forgotten it, David seeming so much a member of The Breck family—the first Thorpe to attend a University. From the first we destined him, as indeed he destined himself, for the ministry, and he went towards that goal unerringly.

Sam too, though only in his early teens as yet, was such a big lad, so shrewd and so scrawny, and with his voice broken and a grown-up manner of talking, that he seemed ready to go out into the world if that were planned for him. He became urgent with his father about this time to apprentice him to some cloth merchant in York or London, especially London; and when John asked me hesitatingly what I thought of the project, I supported it. Not that I wished to lose Sam, God knows. It is hard for a mother to part from any of her children, and I was especially sorry for Sam to go. He was so brisk and hearty, there was such

a lively jesting air about him; though an honest decent virtuous lad enough, he enjoyed the pleasures of life and was not afraid to say so, praising anything particularly good to eat or drink which I set before him, such as my mutton pies, and noticing if I wore fresh cuffs on my dress. Besides, Sam and I had been very near and dear to each other during the hard years when John was away; God knows I could never have brought us safe through those years without my Sam. But I saw it must be so; I saw he must go. I remembered how John and old Mr. Thorpe used to get across with each other in the old days when John was growing to manhood and taking the cloth business on himself, and I saw it would be the same with Sam and John. Already Sam had notions of his own about cloth and its marketing; already he was apt to say: "But, Father, that was before the war; 'tis not so now." Sam was apt, too, to recount things which had happened during the war, himself and his mother being the actors therein, while John was away—it was all in the innocence of his fresh young heart, most surely, yet I thought I saw a shade of jealousy sometimes cross his father's face.

So I let Sam go, for his good and John's; he was a lad would marry and settle young, I judged, and always be well able to take care of himself and stand on his own feet. John found two good openings for him with merchants, one in London and one in York, and gave him his choice; Sam chose London, rather to my surprise. I had thought he would prefer to stay in Yorkshire, he being very fond of his own place and apt to scoff at folk with different manners and speech; indeed I believe he chose London largely because Lord Fairfax was there. If it were so, he was fated to meet disappointment. However, at the time he did not know this. He was apprenticed to a merchant in Blackwell Hall, and went off with the London carrier very cheerfully—after giving us all a hearty kiss and running back to give me and Chris another—vowing that he would soon be a merchant himself, and sell all his father's cloth for a very high price, and wear a furred gown. He took one

of Lord Fairfax's boots with him, very carefully wrapped, but as a great favour left us the other.

Sam proved a good letter-writer, at least in my judgment. He did not, it is true, write with the flowing elegance of Thomas or the courteous grace of David, but there was a shrewd humour in his homely sentences, and he had a knack of bringing a thing vividly before you; if he sometimes misspelled a word, he did not often misjudge a character. We heard from him how he visited Whitehall, and the Exchange, and the Tower, and Paul's—it all sounded very brisk and bustling and noisy, which would be agreeable to Sam. He seemed to be pleasing his master with his quickness for figures and understanding of cloth, but he observed: *Yesterday I saw the Lord General going to his office* so often that at last John wrote to him somewhat sternly, and told him his place was in Blackwell, not Whitehall, and that he hoped no son of his would prove an idle apprentice; it was enough pleasure for a lad of his upbringing, wrote John, to go to hear the noted preachers on Lord's Day. After this Sam was silent for so long that I was troubled, and wrote urging him to send to us more often by the carrier; whereupon a very lively letter came to me from Sam, saying that he had seen the Lord General—I gasped, but the next line read: *hearing a sermon in Cripplegate*, so that I could not but laugh, and even John smiled, if a trifle grimly.

Too soon this pleasure of Sam's, in seeing Lord Fairfax from afar, was ended. For the Scots, dissatisfied with our sectaries for not establishing the Presbyterian Church, proclaimed the late King's eldest son as King under the title of Charles II, and having made him sign the Presbyterian Covenant, fetched him over to Scotland from foreign parts. It was thought by some that the Scots might invade us again; and Cromwell was fetched home from Ireland—where he had performed some notable cruelties—to be ready, under the command of Lord Fairfax, against such an invasion. But now the Council of State, of which both these generals were members, began to debate whether it would not be wisest to prevent the Scots' invading us by

our first invading them; and at this moment Lord Fairfax threw up his general's commission.

Such an uproar as this caused, such earnest dissuasion from the Council and Lord Fairfax's officers, such discussion all over the kingdom! Lord Fairfax's motives were much debated. Some said it was his wife had persuaded him, she being so zealous a Presbyterian and thinking it wrong to fight the Presbyterian Scots; and indeed Lady Fairfax's carriage towards all those of Independent beliefs in religion lent colour to this view. But for my part I do not think it; I think Lord Fairfax felt that horror towards the course to which the Council was instructing him, which a person of Lord Fairfax's noble and scrupulous mind must necessarily feel. To invade a nation lest it should invade us! But how could one be sure of its intent? How take such an aggression upon one's conscience? Surely such an invasion was totally unwarranted, totally wrong! To defend ourselves if attacked is a common right; to attack a nation supposedly friendly, with whom we had sworn a solemn Covenant, was surely just the reverse. And so the Lord General, though strongly urged to the contrary even by Cromwell, sent his commission to the House of Commons by his secretary, and was Lord General no more; "My conscience is not satisfied," said he soberly, "and so I must desire to be excused." Thus our best and noblest man was lost to our cause. Cromwell had his place, with what results, alas, we have only now ceased to smart from; and Lord Fairfax with his wife and Moll retired to Yorkshire, and lived at his new-built house at Nun Appleton, not very far from Marston Moor.

Cromwell marched into Scotland, and our Yorkshire Lambert under him, and our Captain Hodgson under General Lambert. They found the Scots a hard nut to crack, but defeated them at last; and then some of the Scots poured down into England through Lancashire, Lambert on their side harassing them, and Cromwell hot in their rear. Cromwell caught the Scots at Worcester, and there was that great and final battle of the Civil War, when young Charles

Stuart escaped only by hiding in an oak tree, or so we are now told. This was indeed the last battle, and a great victory; and a Thanksgiving was ordered by Parliament, and letters of Cromwell's describing the battle were read from the pulpits, on a following Lord's Day. But we at The Breck had no heart for letters or thanksgiving either. We were glad enough to see the Scottish invasion defeated, but doubted whether there need have been any invasion, had Cromwell not been in power; and what that power might lead to, we already doubted miserably, though our imagination fell far short of the hateful truth.

Indeed, after Lord Fairfax's resignation, John was never young again. In years he was not yet old, being about the same age as the Lord General, at that time barely forty; but disappointment, and the rheumatic pains begun by his long army service, continually growing on him from this time forward, served to slow and age him. Yes; when Black Tom ceased to be the Parliament's General, John Thorpe ceased to be a young man.

A COMMONWEALTH BECOMES A TYRANNY

WITH WHAT A sick perplexity we watched the transactions of the next few years, when all we had fought for was through weaknesses and excesses gradually lost, and our fine new freedom fell under the tyranny of one bold man, I remember with a sore heart now. The words *a settlement of the nation*, at first spoken so hopefully and cheerfully, began presently to be of such common use as to excite derision, and then they became an exasperation, and then at last were left unspoken in despair.

Looking back on it all now, I cannot see why the Parliament, now so old, for it had been sitting more than ten years, did not dissolve itself and call for another election, and then this fresh Parliament, elected by the people, could have settled the nations' affairs. There were difficulties perhaps in the forms to be used, all the laws of England being framed in the King's name, but surely these could have been got over—they were not made a difficulty during the war. Perhaps the Parliament did not wish to dissolve itself, fearing to lose its power and not trusting the people—fear and mistrust are at the root of most great evils, it seems to me. Be that as it may, the Parliament hesitated and would not dissolve, and named a distant date for dissolving and then went back on this and seemed likely to stay at Westminster for ever, whereupon Cromwell lost patience and turned the members out by force of arms. 'Twas said he had the Speaker pulled down from his seat, and handed the great Mace of office itself carelessly to a musketeer, saying: "Take away this bauble!" Words and acts so dreadful, so opposed to all English notions of freedom and

constitutional rule, so contrary to all for which we had shed English and Scottish blood through nine long years, that even now, when I think of them, my spine grows cold and the hair stirs on my head. Was it for this that my Francis died, and Mr. Atkinson, and Sarah's Denton, and all those thousands of well-loved men; was it for this that Isaac Baume limped, and Giles Ferrand's head burned, and John could scarce rise from his chair if the wind was east; was it for this that Bradford was sacked and the cloth trade ruined; was it for this that children starved and women wept? We had fought for liberty, for our right to be governed by a free Parliament, and now, inch by inch, these rights were dragged from our hand. To do Oliver Cromwell justice, I think he did not mean to destroy our liberty; nay, he even thought he was protecting it; but once you destroy lawful ways of rule and depend upon your own goodwill for justice, you become, whether you wish it or no, a tyrant.

So it was with Oliver. He encourages a purge of Parliament so that King Charles may be beheaded; next you find him turning out what is left of Parliament by armed force. Then he summons a Parliament of Puritan notables—good enough men, no doubt, honest and godly, but uneasy and uncertain because they depend on goodwill from above instead of resting on the solid election of the people. This Parliament resigns its power after a while into Oliver's hands, and behold he is Lord Protector! An office which, because it is not subject to any constitutional checks, is far more arbitrary than English kingship. *Oliver P* he signed himself—it made John sick to see it, on proclamations and in the diurnals.

No; Cromwell did not understand, I think, how he had betrayed the people; he continued to call Parliaments, and to use the same language, of justice and righteousness and the workings of Almighty God, as in the days when he was fighting for and not against them. But he quarrelled with the Parliaments—how could he not?—and his writings and utterances while he was Protector, at least as they were

reported in the diurnals, had an uneasy, almost querulous ring about them, as if he were surprised to find himself concerned, for the first time in his life, to defend himself. He betook himself to the palace in Whitehall, and he and his family lived there in a great state which ill became them—though Cromwell himself, as our Sam reported, had a natural greatness of demeanour which enabled him to carry it. Then he appointed Major-Generals to govern the various districts of England—a company of silly mean fellows, who ruled according to their wills, by no law but what seemed good in their own eyes. Our Lambert had the north-eastern district, but God knows he made but a poor hand of it, for almost everything agreeable was forbidden—one scarcely dared to sneeze unless one were an Independent. Cock-fighting and horse-racing I was not sorry to see forbidden, but there was little harm in bowls or football, nor did I see any sense in the breaking in half of our Bradford Market Cross. As for the Royalists, poor souls, such as were suspected of any malignant leanings had to pay a fine again, this time a tenth part of their estate. And then, God help us! there was actually a motion made offering Oliver the kingship! He refused the crown, it is true, but took ten weeks doing so. Meanwhile he had quarrelled with Lambert, he had quarrelled again with Parliament; while the Army was on free quarter—an imposition the whole country groaned under—and near thirty weeks behind in pay, the government being in difficulties for money, just as it used to be in the late King Charles's days, owing to war adventures abroad and resentment at home. At last Cromwell exercised such an arbitrary power that the whole land grew weary of him; we had fought ourselves free, and were not inclined to become his slaves.

All this we watched with an increasingly sore heart, a very sick disappointment and perplexity. The country being so disturbed, with no settlement in prospect, and the Dutch so against us on the seas, the plight of the cloth trade grew desperate—so desperate, indeed, that Oliver himself admitted to the Parliament his serious concern for this

staple English trade. If John had not been local assessor to the Parliament, and steward to a gentleman from the south who held property in the district, we should have fared but poorly, though it is true that at this time we were able to some extent to collect our rents. John being so noted for his service to Lord Fairfax, for whom everyone high and low still had a great respect, did not suffer much inconvenience from the new political and religious bodies which were always being appointed to pry into people's affairs. But the decay of liberty at the hands of our own friends, the sinful divisions amongst those who lately were brothers in arms for a high cause, these were a dark cloud and a running sore, and marred all that should have been enjoyable to us. Thomas took his Master of Arts degree, and was ordained, and began his ministry in Peterborough, whence we heard excellent reports of him; Sam came out of his apprenticeship and seemed like to follow the natural course of industrious apprentices and marry a partnership with his master's daughter, an honest hearty girl from all we heard of her; David resigned his fellowship and began a happy ministry in Surrey; so that if the times had been right we should have had much quiet joy and pride in our family. But the times were not right, and everything that was wrong with them seemed as it were underlined for us in our own house by a pointing finger, and the one who pointed the finger was Chris.

For we knew not what to do with Chris.

At this time he was in his teens and very well grown for his age; tall and slender but as strong as steel, his voice very manly, deep and musical. It was John's especial care, nay it was almost a point of honour with him, to show kindness to Chris and a persistent concern for his welfare, and as I saw it eased him to do so, it was my part to accept his kindness and make it welcome, though sometimes his generosity irked me, for I am one always more blessed in giving than receiving. As often happens with a duty very faithfully and scrupulously performed, the faithfulness brought its own reward, for John grew truly fond of Chris—

not as a son, for that is of the blood, not to be gained by merely willing it, but perhaps as a dear nephew. It seemed to me that the affection he had given to Francis, which had been turned to hatred, found its full fruition in Francis's son. Chris as a child being very loving and merry, was as sweet in manner to John as to anyone else, and this was pleasurable to John; and since John was of a reserved nature and not given to many caresses, this suited Chris too. He would carry a broken toy to John to be mended with a look of perfect trust which was very agreeable to me; the fondness between Sam and Chris, too, made it easy for my sons to be all brothers together. This was when Chris was a child. Had the times been right, John's great honesty and Chris's natural goodness would have brought us safely to the time when he left home and found his place in the outer world; but there was no place in Cromwell's Protectorate for Chris.

Chris was a natural leader in all sports and games and feats of daring, quick in decision, swift in action, both adventurous and determined; but at his book he was not so much slow or stupid as not there at all. His mind was out in the sun and wind, he listened to teaching from a great distance. Such fragments of learning as he acquired simply stuck in his bright head by chance as they blew by. I strove to teach him his Latin accidence, but even when he was a great lad, taller than I, he could never be relied on to give a first declension genitive accurately. John spent hours striving to put the rules of arithmetic in his head, and would not despair, but he never got Chris beyond the golden rule—Abraham at six was a better mathematician than Chris at sixteen. At one time John began to take Chris about to market with him, thinking, I believe, that as Thomas and Sam were so well provided for, there was room for Chris as well as Abraham as clothiers at The Breck. Chris enjoyed these excursions, being always completely happy when he was on a horse, but when asked to give some account of the cloth sold, or distinguish between different qualities of yarn, he was amazed and disconcerted,

and stood on one foot with a perplexed air, grieved with himself and quite at a loss. He looked with interested amusement at our looms upstairs, but could not throw a shuttle to save his life.

"Chris will never make a clothier, John," I said once, in a quiet sensible tone, as if it were one of our own lads we were discussing.

"I know—I know," said John. "But what *will* he make?"

"Why, a soldier or a sailor, surely," I said.

"In that tyrant's forces?" said John hotly, with a frown. "Besides, there is no getting a commission, and if a commission were got there is no promotion for any man nowadays save one with fanatical Independent views, a Cromwell's man. But it's time the lad was put to something," fretted John, "that's certain. Or he will fall into bad ways."

He did not add: "like his father," but I knew what was in his mind, and indeed it was not very easy to reassure him, for Chris seemed to have very little feeling for religion. As a child he had been religious enough; I had taught him just as I taught my other sons, joining his little hands together in prayer by his bedside when he was yet a babe, explaining the commandments to him and telling him the good old Bible stories, and he listened earnestly enough; but now there was such a confusion in religion, there were so many congregations of so many different kinds, all hating and persecuting each other, that in a way I do not wonder that when Chris looked at religious people with his clear eyes he found them wanting. He accompanied us to church, naturally, but never seemed eager to go there, and he would not begin to take the Lord's Supper, though he was now of a proper age. John was much grieved at this, and bade me press him; he simply said: "I do not wish it, Mother," and when I urged him again, laughed and said teasingly: "I am not in a proper state of grace," and pulled my hair loose over my ears and kissed me, and bounded off.

Not that my Chris was bad in any sense; nay, he had a heart of gold. He never lied, or cheated, or sought his own advantage, or was rude or unkind; everyone loved him,

even Mr. Watkin the schoolmaster, who shook his head over Chris's smudged exercises and said it was useless to think of sending him to the University. John was disappointed, for he wanted to do better by Chris than had been done by Francis, yet relieved too in these bad times not to need to find the money for it. I had an idea at one time that Chris would have done very well at a University, if he had been allowed to take up studies of a different kind, for indeed he read avidly, though not such books as we were wont to have at The Breck. God knows where he got the books he read—I found old playbooks and chapbooks stuffed in his pockets, and he had a volume by Sir Walter Raleigh, and another of Hakluyt's *Voyages*, which he greatly prized. Perhaps he might have been one of those University wits David had told me of, who lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth of famous memory, and in the early days of Charles I. But all such wits were gone now, only serious theological studies seemed to be allowed.

At one time Chris took a great desire to go to London. I was so glad to find him eager on any plan of work that, though I felt part of me would die if Chris were to leave me, I urged this course on John.

"But what will he do there?" objected John.

"He can be apprenticed to some merchant—our Sam has done well enough for himself there," said I.

"Aye, but our Sam had a trade at his finger-tips," said my husband. "If Chris goes, knowing naught of trade or figuring, there will be no value in him, he will be just a common drudge. Let him not think of going unless he be pretty expert in arithmetic," said John, fretting: "Or he will be beaten and knocked and made a blockhead and a drudge." Seeing the distress his words caused me, he added gently: "I only wish to do what is right by the lad, Penninah, you know that."

"Perhaps his place is on the land," I said.

"There is no livelihood to be got nowadays from the land," replied John gloomily.

Indeed in the unsettled condition of the country there

seemed no opening anywhere, and Chris was the one of my lads to suffer for it. Thomas and Sam were born before the war, Abraham afterwards; Thomas and Sam had our cause to fight for, and thought tribulation worth enduring for it, by the time Abraham reached manhood there had come a peace on the land; it was Chris, born in the war-time yet too young to understand it, his childhood not properly protected, his youth uncertain, it was Chris who lacked a place in the world and a cause to direct him thither.

I remember the first time it came to me that it was not only worldly prospects which were blank for Chris, there was a spiritual lack for him in the Protectorate as well. He had seemed moody the last few days—it was about the time John refused to let him go to London—and so when he was very late coming in from school I grew first vexed, and then very uneasy and finally alarmed. It was a wild autumn evening; the wind was blowing very furiously round our house, tossing the yellowing trees down by the beck and wailing and roaring in the chimneys. Then it began to rain very heavily, and I was distressed to think of Chris being out in such weather; I went often to the door and stood it wide to listen for him, but he came not. John and Abraham were both sitting by the fire; Abraham was making a drawing of a spinning-wheel with wool on it and a hand holding the wool, very delicate and accurate, so that I marvelled at it, and John, with his right leg stretched out before him on a buffet—for he was apt to be lame in that leg now in wet weather, like his father—looked over his shoulder and explained the spinning of the fibres as the child drew them. Their faces were very peaceful and happy, and as I turned back to them I thought how steady and at ease they looked: Abraham small and fine, with his high forehead and long dark lashes and bright dark eyes and his delicate fingers moving a pair of compasses which Sam had sent him from London, John strong and solid beside him. The Thorpes were the steadiness and ease of my life, I thought, and the Ferrands the torment and the joy; but if I were called on again to choose between them, which should I choose, ah,

which? I need them both, I thought, shutting out the wild night and returning to the fire; I need them both.

It was not long after this that we heard Chris's clear tuneful whistle round the corner of the house, and the lad came lightly in. He was hatless and without a cloak, and consequently drenched; his thick hair was sleeked to his head with wet and his clothes clung to his body, but there was a very bright light in his eyes, and his fine lips were smiling joyously. When John saw him he sighed and sat up, putting his foot down from the buffet.

"Where have you been, Francis?" he asked in a stern tone.

"My name's not Francis," returned Chris impatiently, making for the kitchen to take off his boots.

A dark colour came into John's cheek. "I crave your pardon, Chris," he said. "Where have you been since school?"

"On the moors," said Chris, not looking at him.

"You should not stay out so late without giving us warning," John told him gravely. "Your mother has been very anxious for you, Chris."

Chris turned his bright head so quickly that the drops flew from it. "I'm sorry, Mother," he said. "I'm sorry. I didn't think you'd be anxious so soon."

"You must learn to think," said John drily. "Take off your wet clothes and go to bed."

"Yes, Father," said Chris meekly, though with a sigh.

At supper time Abraham asked if he should take food and drink up to his brother, and the maid was equally anxious to perform this task; I reserved it, however, to myself, and when we had finished carried up some supper, and sat beside Chris while he ate.

"Who was with you on the moors, Chris?" I asked.

"Nobody," said Chris, carving his meat very vigorously.

"Why did you go, then?" said I.

"Oh, well—I don't know—there was a heap of wind up there," said Chris, his eyes glowing very brightly.

"Have you studied your lesson for to-morrow, Chris?" I asked.

Chris's face fell. "No. I forgot," he said.

"Chris," I said, "it is time you put yourself to some work, lad. You are too old now to hang about home and school."

Chris nodded with his mouth full.

"What would you like to do?" I said.

"I don't know," said Chris, rolling his eyes at me in mockery.

"There must be some one thing you like to do," I said.

"I like horses and dogs and riding about and things that are dangerous," said Chris. "I want to go away from Bradford."

"Why?" I said, turning to snuff the candle so that he should not see how he had hurt me.

"It's so tedious here, Mother," said Chris. "Nothing but cloth and sermons and old men talking about the war."

"Chris!" I reproached him.

"Well, 'tis so," contended Chris. "Why they fought at all I cannot see, for they all seem to have lost by it. The war is long past now in any case, so why talk of battles?"

"Chris," said I, putting aside these disturbing insults for the moment: "Whom wouldst like to resemble, love, when thou art a man?"

"I don't know," said Chris thoughtfully, biting into an apple.

"Thy father?" I said timidly, meaning John.

Chris shook his head.

"Mr. Ferrand?" I suggested.

"No!" said Chris.

"Lord Fairfax?"

"No. He's beaten—they're all beaten," said Chris disgustedly. "There isn't one has got his way."

"Oliver Cromwell, then?" said I.

"What, fat old Noll? I thank you, no," said Chris. "They're all so tedious, Mother."

I sighed and rose to go away. It was but too true; in this age—its politics so confused, its principles so broken, all that was noblest in it huddled in a tame defeat—there

was nothing to catch the bright fancy of a boy; no clear course to steer, no heroic figure to follow. There was no man for Chris to admire as Thomas had admired David and Sam admired Lord Fairfax.

"Hi! Mother!" called Chris.

"What is it, son?" said I, returning and stooping tenderly over him.

"That was a very small apple," said Chris, shaking his head in pretended solemnity.

"I suppose that means you want another," said I.

"Even so, Mother," said Chris, giving me a swift warm hug.

I went down and found Abraham laying aside his pens ready to go to bed, so I gave him an apple for himself and one for Chris, to take up with him.

When he had gone and all was quiet and I took out my needlework and sat beside John, I saw that he was looking very gloomy. I tried to distract him with a word or two about Abraham, but he gave me short answers. Then he seemed to repent of this, and broke out suddenly:

"In what have I failed the boy?" Seeing I did not understand him: "In what have I failed Chris?" he repeated in explanation.

"Failed Chris?" I exclaimed. "Thou hast not failed him."

"Aye, but I have," said John. "Why does the boy go wandering over the moors at night? I did not understand Francis, and I do not understand Chris. I have failed him in some way."

He seemed so perplexed and distressed that I was fain to say I did not understand Chris either. But this was not quite true. I remembered the days when I first came as a bride to The Breck, and how heavy and dull and narrow life had seemed there to me then. In those days, what would I not have given to be able to rush out alone to the wind, to the wild hillside, as Chris did! But God had given my life direction and purpose, had moulded my wildness of heart into a strong intention; now, in these confused and distracted times, there seemed no general purpose for Chris

to turn to. I spoke of this to John, and he understood what I meant to say and saw some light in it, and we talked of the sinful divisions among the godly, very soberly and sadly.

One sign of this strange confusion of beliefs and parties was the marriage of Lord Fairfax's daughter, which had taken place about that time. (It made me feel old indeed, to think of little Moll Fairfax, whom I had fed and tended, now being grown enough to wed.) That her husband should be the Duke of Buckingham seemed very strange to me. He was a great nobleman, no doubt, and no doubt a handsome and attractive man, but that Black Tom's daughter should marry such a Royalist, the son too of that abominable Duke whose exactions had begun the troubles which led to the Civil War--that I could not contemplate calmly. A few years ago such a match would have been impossible; that Lord Fairfax consented to it was a measure of the distance Cromwell's tyrannies had driven moderate folk. Yes, as John and I sat together that night, talking of Chris and the Protectorate and Moll Fairfax's husband, we both agreed that some sad judgment was surely near at hand for England.

A SHIP SAILS

THIS WAS A year for weddings; there was Moll Fairfax's marriage, and our Sam's—no, that came the following year; but there was that other match, very unexpected by me, though looking back now I see he always had a fancy for the girl.

One afternoon when John returned from some of his steward's business I looked out as he rode up, and saw he had another man beside him; a long thin body of somewhat awkward carriage, but well clad in sober merchant's style, and riding a nag of good shape, well fed. I heard John's voice calling me next moment, and left Chris, on whose doublet I was sewing a button, bidding him cut the ends of the thread himself as I went downstairs. I was growing a little heavier in those days and did not fly up and down as I used when I was nimbler on my feet, so by the time I reached my guest he and John were standing on the hearth together. He is an ugly but well-meaning man, I thought, observing with what an air of serious interest he was regarding Abraham, who was already showing him a drawing. He had coarse short hair of a salt-and-pepper colour, and a flat frog-like face.

"This is an old friend of ours, Penninah," said John. I knew by his voice that he did not quite mean what he said, and I looked at the stranger more shrewdly.

"You do not know me, Mistress," said he in a somewhat mournful tone: "I am become a stranger to my brethren."

"Ah, heavens! Can it be Joseph Lister?" I cried.

Lister smiled. "The very same, Mrs. Thorpe," said he.

"Why—Lister," I stammered, for in truth I did not know

how to greet him: "It is long since we saw you. You have done well for yourself, it seems."

"Aye, the Lord hath prospered my way," said Lister. "I have been much about the country since I departed from The Breck."

"He has been in London, and seen our Sam," put in John.

"Oh, I have spent several years in London," said Lister condescendingly. "And after, I was steward for a gentleman in Durham. But the preaching there has of late become so clouded and confused, I am come home again to Yorkshire to hear sermons with some meat in them."

"Well, Lister," said I in an easy gracious tone, for I was vexed a little by his smug carriage: "For the sake of old times I forgive you for deserting us in a time of trouble, and make you heartily welcome to The Breck."

"Deserting you in a time of trouble!" exclaimed Lister, taken aback. "Did I not get the hay in for you?"

"Why," I began, but broke off, for I saw Lister's eyes fix suddenly in a wide stare at something beyond my head. I turned, and there was Chris, leaning against the angle of the stairs, dangling the scissors in his hand. I had never seen him look so tall, so handsome, or so like his father.

"I brought your scissors," he murmured, disconcerted a little by Lister's silent stare.

Lister's face was as white as tallow. I saw what a strange conjunction it was of the four of us: Lister, and John, and Francis's son, and me. And the boy there was so ignorant of it all, and thought our lives at The Breck so tedious and dull! My heart melted.

"This is my third son, Christopher," said I. "Chris, this is Joseph Lister."

Chris came forward with his frank smile and his easy manner, and gave Lister his hand—he had been trained, I take some pride to say it, after a better prescription than his father, and was always courteous, especially to those who were older or poorer or some way weaker than he.

"I have heard much of you from my brother Sam," he said.

Lister dropped his hand as if it were fire, but could not take his eyes from the lad.

"He hath your voice of velvet, Mistress," said he.

"Well—you will stay and dine with us, will you not, Lister?" I went on hurriedly. "And what trade do you intend to drive in Bradford? Shall you be a steward again, or return to cloth?"

"I thought to be a merchant," muttered Lister, in a voice so changed from his former complacency that I felt bound to try to cheer him.

"I am sure far-seeing merchants are much needed in these hard times," I said.

John was relieved that this awkward meeting had passed off without open flame, and as we all sat down together he became more at ease with Lister, and they fell to talking of old times. I could see Chris's look of tedium at all this, courteously veiled, and Abraham listening with a puzzled air, as children do to talk of times long past, and I had a strange sense of how life rolled on, how a moment ago I was a child listening to my elders at The Breck, and now I was an elder with children listening to me, and all my life had gone like a flash between.

"I believe Joseph here will need your good offices towards his settlement in Bradford, wife," John was saying with a smile. "He thinks to wed your Sarah's eldest daughter."

"She is very young," I said, startled, and I remembered a picture I had not called to mind for many a year—little Sarah leaning against her Uncle Lister's knee, as she called him, while the Royalists attacked Bradford Church. That was a couple of moments only before Francis's death. "I hope you will prosper in your wooing," I said, in politeness bound, but my voice was so cold that the children looked at me curiously.

"The God of Heaven alone shall prosper us," said Lister, offended.

His utterance was smoother than of old, his manner less

uncouth, and his hair less ugly now that it was greying; moreover there was something in his keeping a fondness for young Sarah through all these years and returning rich to a poor girl, which was taking to a woman's heart; but for all that I could not imagine any woman fancying him. However, it was none of my business, as I told Sarah and her daughter when they came up to The Breck a few days later to ask my advice. They sat on the edge of our chairs, clad in their poor best, and wished to know what Mr. Thorpe and I thought of Mr. Lister's proposal. I thought John would not wish to be consulted in the matter, for he had turned against Denton since he became so fanatical and mutinous, and when I was obliged to aid Sarah after Denton's death, though he did not actually forbid me he folded his mouth rather sourly when he caught me at it. So I said merely:

"Joseph Lister is forty and your daughter is just turned twenty—but yet if they like each other that is not against the match."

I had never taken much notice of young Sarah before, regarding her only as one of our Sarah's children, but now I looked at her more closely. She was a round yellow-haired solid girl, squat and sturdy like her father and no beauty, quiet and bashful, yet with a certain sly look in her eyes—I thought perhaps she would hold her own with Lister as well as any woman. I would have naught to do with the match, either for or against; but knowing how hard put to it the Dentons were, poor things, since Denton was shot, I was not surprised when Lister had his way, and married the girl within a month or two of his return to Bradford. It was a sign of the times that he was, in a sense, married twice. Under the rule of those hateful Major-Generals it was a law that marriages had to be performed by magistrates only. Lister complied with this, and was married by a justice, but the civil ceremony did not satisfy him, and a fortnight later he had his uncle, an ordained minister, to marry them again. It seemed to me that when such heathenish goings-on were countenanced by any nation, a sad judgment

was in store for it, and to do Lister justice, he thought so too. On the occasion of the second marriage, we had a sermon and a wedding breakfast, and John and I perforce were present.

Lister took a house in Bradford, at the near end of Kirk-gate, and set up as a merchant, and John and he did business together. I was sorry for his return and uneasy at his presence, which reminded us of things best forgotten, and at first John seemed the same. But presently Lister's wife conceived and bore him a son, and Lister was so much excited about his fatherhood that he thought of little else. I went to see Sarah Lister while she was in bed, taking some jellies and broths and the like, and to make pleasant talk between us asked what she meant to call her child.

"David," said she.

I was startled and not very well pleased.

"After your brother," added Sarah.

Something in her voice made me believe she was not best pleased either, and I asked her whether the name were her own choice.

"Nay, it is my husband's," said Sarah.

"A woman should name her own children," said I.

"Did you name yours, Mrs. Thorpe?" said Sarah slyly.

I was startled; and looking back, I remembered how I had always wished to name a child Robert, for my father, and yet had never done so; and I laughed, and Sarah Lister laughed too, and after that I always found her very tolerable. For all she was so stolid and lacking words, I thought she derived some quiet amusement from her husband's pomposity. Their child, David, was dedicated from birth to the Lord's work and service in the Lord's ministry. I own I disliked him; he had a flat face like Lister, and towy hair like Sarah, and a very high colour in his cheeks, and to me seemed a rude ungracious child, very homely in speech and always picking his nose. That such a child should bear my David's name was disagreeable to me, and yet I could not but acknowledge that Lister's love for my brother had something good and pleasant in it.

It was the sight of Lister, I am sure, which caused poor old Giles Ferrand to fall ill in the autumn of Lister's return. As it chanced, Chris was the one who brought them face to face. It was Market Day and he was standing by the broken Market Cross, supposed to be assisting John but in truth only looking about and enjoying the bustling scene, and old Giles came up and stood by him. Giles was babbling on about something and nothing, running his fingers through his beard and twirling up his drooping moustache, when Lister passed by, very complacent and snug in a thick new cloak. Chris saw him and greeted him politely, and Lister replied in his harsh grating voice:

"Good morning, Master Christopher."

Old Giles spun round at the voice, and stared at him, and Lister stared back brazenly. At least, that is how Giles told me the story, but in truth I think Lister's look was not brazen at all, but simply unrecognising. Poor Mr. Ferrand was a very odd figure at that time; with his shabby old-fashioned clothes and his long beard, and his head bald on top and long hair straggling into his neck, he looked so different from the rich fashionable Cavalier whom Lister would remember as Mr. Ferrand of Holroyd Hall, that I do not believe he recognised him. However that may be—for I never heard Lister allude to the matter—old Giles clutching at the air with one cramped old hand, and uttering a strangled sound in his throat, gazed so wildly at Lister that Chris said anyone who knew him not would think him crazy; and Lister drew himself up with an offended air, muttering something (a text, I expect), and moved on with as stately a step as his awkward gait could compass.

The result of this meeting was that a few days later old Ralph, who was now grown very tottering and mottled, came to our back door to beg me to visit Mr. Ferrand, who had taken to his bed.

It was sad indeed to me to see the change in Holroyd Hall, for though old Giles had come to The Breck often enough, and we had been in his laithe, I had not entered his dwelling-house for nigh on fifteen years. It was cold and damp and

dark within, the windows being smeared with dust; all the downstairs rooms save the kitchen were empty of furniture, the corners thick in white cobweb, and long threads of dirt hanging from the ceilings. The coat of arms over the parlour mantel was so dark with dirt it could hardly be discerned. Upstairs, Mr. Ferrand's room was almost as bare as The Breck after the Royalist sack; the bed was the same fine old carved piece as before, but the chair and table were of some common wood, new and roughly shaped. I was amazed at all this, and at Mr. Ferrand's scant and dirty bed-clothes; and as I bent over him to ask how he did, I remembered Holroyd Hall as it looked in my youth, and the tears stood in my eyes. This vexed Mr. Ferrand.

"None of that, Penninah!" said he testily. "No tears, if you please. Suppose I must die, well, 'tis the common lot; there is no need to be lugubrious about it."

He was very determined in this sense all through the winter, and I humoured him as well as I could, though my heart ached to see him. Our maids and I between us kept him clean and tidy and well fed, and we combed his fair silky beard, of which he was very proud, and his thin locks, and told him the news of Bradford; and almost every day he would urge us not to be lugubrious, and explain how if he had not got that bang on the head at Marston Moor, he would have lived to a good old age, he would have outlived Oliver Cromwell. (Since he was well past seventy we hardly knew what to say in reply.) There seemed nothing much the matter with him, but the physician we sent said he was just fading away, he would last only a few months longer. He would not talk of his own affairs, or matters of public interest; I tried him once with Moll Fairfax's marriage to the Duke of Buckingham, thinking he might be interested in this joining of erstwhile enemies, but his old face so winced and shrank at the name of Fairfax that I never spoke again to him of anything which might recall the Civil War. He liked to talk of foolish unimportant things, the new fashion for periwigs, for instance; and he liked to see the children, Chris and Abraham, though whether he made a

distinction between them or not, I could not tell. He lay with his hands folded, gazing at them and smiling, if they chanced to come to the Hall to fetch me; he could not always catch what they said, and made odd comments, misapprehending them; when they set him right politely, in a louder tone, he smiled again and seemed well content. I reproached myself then for not having confessed Chris's parentage to him, but he was too far gone now for such weighty matters; he was just a poor silly old man, dying not without gallantry, as he had lived.

And so, that summer, I went from the childbed, of Lister's wife to the deathbed of old Giles Ferrand. Such contrasts are familiar in every woman's life, it being the especial business of women to cherish their kinsfolk through the dark hours of birth and death; and while these contrasts are full of sadness, they are also full of hope. Life renews itself; the old die, but the children are born, and with them the hope of a better world; and while for my part I thought a child of Lister's a poor substitute for old Uncle Giles, who was I to question the workings of Providence? I passed, then, from the birth of David Lister to the death of Giles Ferrand, both taking place in early summer.

John was vexed to hear that he was appointed his uncle's executor by his will, poor Giles having no other near kin left to him. (This explained old Giles's saying when John offered to sell his fleeces, we agreed.) He returned from a consultation with Giles's lawyer with a very dark hot angry look on his face; he took me by the arm and hurried me upstairs, and shut our doors and turned to me and said, speaking very rapidly:

"Uncle Giles has left all his estate to Chris—I am to stand possessed of it now for his use and behoof—in the end it comes all to Chris."

"What!" I cried. "Why——"

"You know very well why, Penninah," said John in a deep angry tone.

"But how did he know?" I marvelled.

"You did not tell him then?" said John.

"He asked me once and I lied to him," I said.

John took a deep breath and seemed to quieten. "Well—so it is," he said.

"Will this not settle Chris's livelihood, then?" I asked him eagerly.

"Why, yes and no, Penninah," said John in a dejected tone. "What with Uncle Giles's composition, and this later decimation fine by Lambert, and large sums he lent on the public faith to the Earl of Newcastle never repaid, and mortgages on the land to pay all these, and the low price of wool, there is almost nothing left, almost nothing at all."

"Poor old man," said I. "That is the reason he would not take your help in his affairs, John; he was ashamed."

"Why, doubtless 'twas so," said John. "But he would have done better to take it. If I must tell you all, Penninah, there is less than nothing; it will cost us much to put all straight in an honourable fashion. Nevertheless, Penninah," said John steadily: "For thy sake and the boy's it shall be done."

"John," said I: "Thou art the best and truest-hearted man in England."

"Saving only Lord Fairfax," said John, laughing, though he was moved.

"Nay, I do not except even Lord Fairfax," said I, shaking my head.

"Well—we must tell the boy now, or he will hear it from common gossip," said John briskly. He called Chris's name about the house, and out at the windows, and in a moment Chris flew in from some outdoor haunt—he was so light-footed that he seemed often to appear suddenly out of the air.

"Christopher," said John in a solemn manner: "You were ever old Uncle Giles's favourite here, and now he has left you all his estate. I stand possessed of it for your use and behoof, till you reach manhood. The estate is much encumbered," went on John: "But with seven or eight years' stern application, we may clear it."

A look of distaste and dismay shadowed Chris's bright face. "I don't want it," he muttered.

"Is it the estate you do not want, or the work to clear it?" asked John sternly.

"I don't know," said Chris honestly. Then he blurted: "I want to go to America."

I cried out: "No! No!" so violently that they both stood looking at me. "What dost thou want with New England, lad?" I went on quickly. "It is tedious there as here—it is a very sober godly place—there are many ministers there—Lister hath an uncle there. It would not suit you."

"I do not mean New England," said Chris impatiently. "I mean Virginia."

We stared at him.

"You have it all planned, it seems," said John at length.

Chris swung one foot and looked a trifle sulky. "I have heard talk," he said: "And read of it. I want to go to Virginia. I want to go, Mother."

"Why," said I, trembling with a sudden icy cold which filled me: "If you want to go, Chris—if you want to leave me——"

"I will write to our Sam about it," broke in John, very loud and harsh.

Chris's face brightened. "Oh, thank you, Father!" he cried. "Thank you!"

"Thank thy mother, lad," said John gruffly.

There was a great deal of writing going on at that time between Sam and his father, because Sam was to be married that year to his master's daughter, Constance Bagnall, and there seemed to be much lawyer's business, though no real difficulties, to be settled between them. A letter came very soon, it seemed to me—too soon, too soon!—from Sam to say that dispirited needy Cavaliers had sailed continually to the Virginia plantation ever since the King's execution, Virginia, it seemed, being a Royalist kind of place; Sam therefore did not recommend it. John had asked him what chance there was for a young lad out there, and Sam replied that there was plenty. Some lads, he said, went as

redemptioners, who did not pay their passage out, but bound themselves to work there for a master for four years or more, the money for their purchase (for it was almost that) going to the captain who brought them.

"Chris shall not go like that," said John.

"I should not mind, Father," said Chris. "The years would pass."

"You are content to work four years almost as a slave in Virginia, but will not work seven as a free man to gain a good estate in Yorkshire," said John bitterly.

The look of distaste and weariness crossed Chris's face again. "It is so narrow here, so tedious," he muttered.

"He has set his mind to go, Penninah," said John to me that night: "And I fear it will be little use trying to dissuade him. But I will not urge you," he went on quickly: "God knows I will not try to part you from him, Penninah."

I lay awake at John's side all that night, still and cold, and poured out my soul to the Lord in silent prayer. It was a night of fearful anguish; my soul and my body seemed almost to part company, to dissolve in its bitterness; for to part from Chris was to me a kind of death. To me he was not merely a child with the other children, whom I loved and kissed and mothered—indeed there were few caresses between us; he was not merely bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh; he was half of my life, and to tear him away was to tear half my life from me. So I wrestled in anguish of flesh and spirit, feeling sick unto death. Nay, I even found myself saying, blasphemously as I fear, the words of Christ in the garden of Gethsemane: "Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from me!" To lose Chris is my punishment for my sin in conceiving him, I thought; but then my heart rose up in rebellion, and said: Not so! It is this strange time, not war and not peace, this wretched time when counsel is darkened and men stagger to and fro, which takes Chris from me. But even as I thought thus, the answer to my prayer came to me: If thou keep thy son at home, something ill will befall him. And I knew it to be true, and at long last I said: "Not my will, but Thine, be done,

O Lord." And I shuddered and the tears poured down my face, and John awoke and took me in his arms and comforted me, grieving over me, yet uttering no word of admonition or reproach, so that by degrees my agony passed, and I was able to speak of Chris's going and how it could best be compassed, as though I were a live woman and not a naked soul in searing torment. This night was my true parting from Chris; and after this I was not young any more.

I began to stitch and knit for Chris, but had not time to complete my preparations, for many things happened suddenly. John called Chris before him and urged him most solemnly to wait for a few years, till he should be a man, before sailing away from us; but the dark look of vexation crossed Chris's face again at this, and indeed he was doing no good at The Breck and might as well be learning the new land's ways while he was young and pliable, and so it was settled he should go as soon as a passage could be found for him. Then Sam wrote of a passage for Chris in a ship which would shortly sail from London, under a captain who was a very good man, a friend of Mr. Bagnall's, who would see Chris well placed; so John commanded him to arrange the matter, and he bought some of Chris's mortgaged land from him so that the boy would have money in his pocket when he reached the strange country, and he began to plan to travel to London himself, to take Chris safe there and visit the gentleman's widow he was steward for and see our Sam married. While this was yet uncertain, suddenly there came a messenger in the Fairfax livery, saying Lady Fairfax and the Duchess of Buckingham were travelling to London, setting out on the morrow. The Duke of Buckingham, it seemed, had been arrested and thrown into the Tower for some fancied plot against the Protectorate, and Lord Fairfax had already set off for London to beg his release from Cromwell, and his wife and daughter were to follow him; and Lord Fairfax had heard from his agent in London of our son's impending marriage and of our younger son's departure, and if we cared we could travel to London, both John and I, with Lady Fairfax—only we must set

off at once and join them at Doncaster. In my young days such a plan would have sent me wild with excitement, so that I understood very well why Chris turned quite pale when he heard it, and his eyes glittered; but now I felt dazed and saw merely all its inconveniences. But John said that he and Chris must take the great chance thus offered, and so I must needs either go with them or part from Chris within an hour; and this last was impossible, and so I put our clothes in a pack and sent Abraham to Coley to stay with the Hodgsons who had a fondness for him, and John hurriedly rode into Bradford and entrusted his affairs to Lister; and we set out, John and Chris on our own horses, and I riding pillion with the servant.

Well! This journey to London hath made me quite notable around Bradford, and even now many of our neighbours will ask to hear its story. But alas, I remember very little of it, for to me it was a nightmare. People and places swam dizzily in and out of it, and changed abruptly, as they do in nightmares; all I remember clearly is that I was never out of suffering, I felt all the time as if I had a fever.

For the most part of the way I travelled in Lady Fairfax's coach, with herself and her daughter. Lady Fairfax had not changed much, either in character or in looks; only her complexion was a trifle browner, her features a trifle sharper, her tongue decidedly more wandering, than of old. She met me with a long tirade on how she was glad to have an hour's stay in Doncaster, since she did not wish Moll to be frightened by thinking there was need to hurry—I smiled to myself as I remembered her ways of old, and translated this into anger at our delaying her and her daughter. She was much vexed, if one were to judge by her talk, with the Duke of Buckingham for wedding Moll, and her husband for consenting, yet John told me it was common talk she herself had made the match. At first there was a kind of stiffness between us, which I could not exert myself properly to remove; Lady Fairfax, it seemed, did not know of Chris's departure, did not know, therefore, why I should be so dumb and dazed. It was the Duchess who discovered my

grief, for she had a grief too, and sorrow is a strong bond. As I rode gazing with unseeing eyes out of the window at the fields and woods as they rolled by—it was summer, and the land was doubtless very lovely, but I saw it not—she laid a hand on my wrist and drew my trouble forth from me by gentle questions. She was a woman grown now, this little Moll whom I had fed and tended, and very highly educated by many tutors, poets and such; but she was very much the same in looks and bearing as when she was a child; small and slight and very dark-complexioned, with dark scanty hair, and somewhat unfinished features, redeemed from plainness only by the look of noble benevolence in her fine dark eyes. She explained my trouble to her mother, whom she seemed to manage very well; Lady Fairfax exclaimed, and looked at me, and then leaned out of the coach window and called to a man of Lord Fairfax's who rode beside, and bade him bring Christopher Thorpe to her. In a moment my Chris appeared, bowing very gracefully but coldly in the saddle. Lady Fairfax spoke a word to him and let him go, then turned to me with all her old kindness in her eyes.

"Why, Penninah Thorpe," said she, "he is the handsomest lad I have seen these seven years!" Her face changed, and she sighed, then cried out suddenly: "Each of us loves a man who leaves us!"

"Mother!" exclaimed Moll, colouring—for indeed she doted on her husband, who was already not very faithful to her, or so folk said.

From that time Lady Fairfax was her old self to me, and we talked long and intimately of all that happened to us since we parted on the night of the siege. We talked both in the coach, and at nights when we stopped, for she had me in to dine with her. From all she said, the nation's affairs were in a worse way than we thought, with many intrigues and rebellings amongst the Army officers; and she was very bitter that Lord Fairfax should have to ask a favour of Cromwell.

"'Tis the first and last favour, I warrant you," she said,

tossing her head. "A pretty son-in-law, to necessitate a favour from the Lord Protector."

"Mother!" exclaimed Moll again, painfully.

At last, four days after we left Little Holroyd, we reached London, and were set out at Lord Fairfax's house in Lincoln's Inn, just as it came dusk. John was in great hopes of seeing his General, but these were disappointed; Lord Fairfax was not in the house at the time, and we heard from the servants that Cromwell had that day refused to release the Duke, and the General, deeply angered, meant to set out again for Yorkshire on the morrow. Lady Fairfax exclaimed when she heard this and chattered contradictory orders, and Moll looked dazed and downcast, and we stood in the midst of the Fairfaxes' baggage, longing to take ourselves from where we were not wanted; and then my heart lifted, for Sam came striding in, very brisk and firm and cheerful. He was a grown man, now, our Sam, not very tall but solid and sturdy, with a very fresh cheek and my father's sandy hair and a lively eye. He seemed very well pleased with himself, as a young man about to marry ought to be; he greeted John and me very warmly, and was delighted with Chris, holding him at arm's length and exclaiming over and over how he had grown.

I was afraid lest we should appear very homely and countrified before these London people, these Bagnalls, and not do Sam credit, but when I hinted this Sam laughed heartily.

"Nay, mother," he said: "They are afraid of you, lest they should not be grand enough."

I did not see how this could be, but it seemed it was so, for with John having been so close to Lord Fairfax, and David so high up at Clare and now much respected for his preaching, which he did sometimes in London, the Bagnalls thought of us as belonging to the gentry. It is some fifteen years now since I saw these Bagnalls in Cripplegate, and in truth I do not remember them, even if I ever saw them, very clearly; I remember her as a very quiet large woman and him as a smaller perkier kind of person, I remember

that they had a kind of accent in their voices which sounded strange to our Yorkshire ears, but what complexion they had, or eyes, or how they bore themselves, I do not know, save that they were kind and godly. Sam's Constance I remember well, for I was greatly relieved when I saw her; she was a buxom, jolly, warm-hearted girl, not pretty but comely enough in a fair hearty fashion, and she had that strong steady love for Sam which is the right kind for marriage, for it endures through the many chances and changes of married life. She was an excellent cook, and cleanly about the house as Londoners go—though indeed that is not very far, for I saw some strange ways in merchants' houses in London, both in Cripplegate and with the Bagnalls' friends; they do not wash and scour as we do.

Well, I saw all the sights of London; Paul's and Westminster, and Whitehall, with the very window where the late King was executed; and Cheapside, with the shops and the bustling crowds; and the Thames, with the pretty boats sailing up and down the river; and the Tower, very stern and frowning, and Blackwell Hall in Basinghall Street, with its heaped piles of pieces and its many little rooms, and its hall where business was done in whispers at the ringing of a bell. Sam was very eager about Blackwell Hall; he spoke much of it and of some part he called "the City," the locality of which I never could quite fathom. It was Sam who took us sightseeing—Chris and myself, I mean, for John had seen all the sights many times while he was about the country with Lord Fairfax. Chris seemed quite different in London from what he was in Bradford; there were no more moods or lassitudes, he was always bright and eager and helpful, so that the Bagnalls greatly admired him. I spoke of this to John, and he said it was the same on the journey; Chris was the favourite of all the men, being always ready to put his shoulder to a bogged wheel, or his fingers to mending bits and reins, and very quick and apt at any messages, and extremely skilful and daring in horsemanship.

"So it will be best for him to leave us," said John soberly. "He will do best away and alone."

Only once did I see the look of distaste and irritation shadow the lad's face after we left Bradford. It was when I put Sam on to urge him not to cross the sea.

"Wilt stay with me in London, Chris lad?" said Sam heartily. "Could'st live with me and my wife here."

"You would be very welcome, Chris," said Constance with a kindly look.

But Chris's bright face clouded, so we all saw it was no use.

Sam and his Constance were duly married, at St. Giles' in Cripplegate, and, what gave both the Bagnalls and us great pleasure, David came up from the country and gave us a sermon at the wedding. It was a great pride to me, I own, to see my little brother in a London pulpit. David was as fair and slender as ever, but there was a stern strength, a grave dignity, about him now. He preached on that text from the Philippians: *And this I pray, that your love may abound*. It was a fine noble sermon on the true nature of love, delivered with singular sincerity and beauty; full of scholarly allusions, and yet so clear and simple that a child could follow. Even Sam and Chris, who were neither of them very fond of hearing sermons, listened with all their ears, not stirring; the congregation were very much moved to the Lord's service; as for me, it was only David's sermon that brought me through the next forenoon, when Chris's ship, the *Beaver*, sailed.

For she sailed, that ship, she sailed; she moved away from the land, drawing my heartstrings after her till they broke at last. We all went far down the river in a small boat with a sail, beneath bridges and between clustered grey houses and then open green fields, till we came to a very large ship hanging in the middle of the water, which had many masts and sails and spars and ropes all entangled, just as you see depicted in the prints. There were waves in the river, grey tipped with white, for it was a chill and windy day, though only September; our little boat rocked

and bounced on the water, so that sometimes there seemed to come a hard knock on the bottom of the boat, and the spray flew high all round us. At another time I should have been terrified of all these strange new things, rivers and boats and waves and ships, but then I felt nothing of it at all; I sat and held Chris's hand, so warm and young and strong, clasped in mine beneath my cloak, and thought only of Chris and his going from me. We reached the big ship, which had *Beaver* carved on its hull in very large letters, and lay tossing below its huge bulk, and then we all clambered aboard by a narrow ladder of rope, which swayed in the wind, so that I was very thankful when we all stood safe on deck. Sam took us all up some stairs to see the captain, whom he had met before: a large man with a brown face and kind blue eyes. I could see he liked the look of Chris; he said there was a great chance for young men in the Virginia plantation, and Chris seemed just the sort of lad to go. Then there came a deal of shouting and the captain turned hurriedly away and Sam hustled us down the stairs to the deck, and there were sailors running, and ropes sliding over the deck, and men pulling on other ropes, and sails rising, and masts creaking, and over it all the wind and the strange wild smell of the sea. Then John touched me on the shoulder and said:

"It is now, Penninah."

I took my son in my arms and held him, and kissed him once strongly, and let him go.

I meant to be strong, I did not mean to draw out my farewells; but as I hung on the ladder below, descending to our boat, my flesh betrayed me, and I looked up at him. Chris was standing in the forepart of the ship; he was not looking at me, or at our boat, or at the hurry on the ship, but out to sea. His head was lifted, his rich golden hair blowing in the wind; his eyes were very wide, and there was a smile of joy on his fine red lips. As I watched, he drew a deep breath, and sighed it out, then flung back his head and began to whistle joyously—the clear bright sound was borne on the wind to my ears.

"He is happy," I thought: "He is fully himself, and going to meet his destiny. I could not wish a better thing for him. So I must be glad."

We saw the ship sail, watching at a distance from our little boat, though we had long enough to wait before she moved, and the wind rose and rose, so that the waves grew great and the boat tossed lamentably. David, poor lad, was constrained suddenly to vomit, for which he apologized with his usual courtesy. But at last the sails were all in place, and billowed out with the wind, very white and curved and huge, and there came a sound of singing and a rattling of chains, and our boatmen said the *Beaver* was taking up her anchor. And then with infinite grace the ship moved, heeling over to the wind, shearing easily through the tossing waters, and she glided ever more swiftly away and away and away, till at last we could scarcely see her, and then our boatmen shipped their oars, put up our sail, turned our boat about and made for London. I gazed back, shading my eyes, till I could see the ship no longer.

And so the son of Francis Ferrand set sail for the New World.

When I reached the Bagnalls' house I told John and Sam I must go home. I felt I must have the familiar things of The Breck about me, quickly, or my brain would crack; I could endure no further strain. At first Sam put me off, and I saw he meant to try to keep me for a longer stay, but after he had been out next forenoon he came to us with a very sober face, and said it was best for John and myself to go at once.

"I have it on good authority," said he, "that the Protector is very ill and like to die."

"Then England will be free again!" cried John.

Sam grimaced. "Maybe," he said. "Or maybe not. I think we shan't see better till we have seen worse. You and my mother are best at home."

We took him at his word very thankfully, and set off with the Halifax carrier the next morning. John was to ride one of our horses and lead the other, but his knee had

grown so bad, with too little rest and too much anxiety, that he was fain to sit, while for my part I still felt feverish and sick. We pushed on with the rest, however, enduring as best we could, and at last we came to Bradford, and to the lane, and to our own dear home.

Although we had so longed to see it, when we reached it we felt strange there after our travels, and as if we should never settle down. But time went on and we grew into our old ways again, with letters coming often from Sam and Thomas, and Abraham a great joy to John. I picked up my old duties and found some new ones, and tried to put my love for Chris into them, visiting old Ralph, whom I had put to board with Sarah, very regularly, and devoting myself very carefully to Abraham and John. And presently my whirling thoughts settled, I was able to see things clearly again; I dared begin at last to remind myself of Chris's sailing.

Whenever I thought of it, the picture of his eager daring face, keen set for adventure, between the ship's sails and the tossing waves, came before my eyes, and I knew we had been right to let him go. I know I shall never see him again; I have lost him. England has lost him too. Something of brightness and joy, something of the glory and splendour of life, left the West Riding, perhaps for ever, when Chris found he could not endure to live there any more. I am sorry for that loss, as I am for my own. Still, he will help to make that far land bright. I am glad to think that there is something of Francis, and something of myself, in that far New World.

VI
RETROGRESSION

A MAN IS BURIED WITH HIS CAUSE

SAM WAS RIGHT when he said we should not see better till we had suffered worse. From a tyranny, England now turned into a chaos, so dreadful that at last decent men thought any government at all, however tyrannous, would be preferable to this state of having none.

How this chaos came about, I do not altogether know; I did not take as much notice of what went on as I should. At the time I excused myself for this, saying that I was so tired, so worn-out and weary with all the long struggles, private and public, I had gone through in my life, that I could struggle no more. But now I see that I was in fault; it was because too many English folk were tired and allowed themselves to take little notice, that the good old cause went down in ruin.

On his deathbed, Oliver, perhaps because he was afraid to trust anyone else, named his son Richard as his successor, and so we had as Protector a young gentleman who, as the soldiers said with truth, had never drawn sword or lifted voice in the Commonwealth's cause. If Richard had possessed the virtues of angels, still to many zealots of our cause, and I own to myself also, it was very repugnant that we should have shed so much blood simply to establish another dynasty on the throne. But as it chanced, Richard Cromwell, though doubtless a mild good lad enough, had no qualities fitting him to govern England; indeed he was less fitted even than princes are who inherit a kingdom on the hereditary principle, for he had not been trained and exercised to government as are princes of the blood. If there is anything worse for a nation than a strong tyrant, it is a weak one; and looking back on poor Richard Cromwell

now I am reminded of that Old Testament King—Rehoboam I think his name was, yes, Rehoboam, Solomon's son—who, speaking very high to his people on his accession, with threats to chastise them with scorpions where his father had used only whips, very soon found himself with but few subjects left to chastise. So it was, perhaps, with poor weak Richard; he spoke high but lost all.

At first things went well; a Parliament was called, Lord Fairfax was welcomed there warmly as Member for Yorkshire, and the Duke of Buckingham was released. But this quiet did not last long. The Royalists sprang up and rebelled, though for the time they were put down again; Parliament was angry with the Army, and the Army with Parliament. Parliament contended that the sword should lie in the people's hand, that is, the Army should obey the Parliament; but the Army objected that it had fought the battles and won the victories, and it was not right to leave the soldiers rebuked and scorned and on free quarter and in such long arrears of pay. Then there came divisions in the Army itself, the older officers playing a haughty, self-seeking game, the younger ones, as we heard, caring more for Parliamentary government and a quiet behaviour. Lambert was in favour again, and then out, and then in again. Richard was turned out, and the Army came in; then somehow the Parliament seemed to be in power again. I simply could not make head or tail of it all; the people we had been used to trust and admire seemed all at each other's throats, so we knew not whom to believe in.

I remember one day when there had come some news or other about General Monk, who was in command in Scotland, refusing to allow his soldiers to sign, or even to read, a petition which Lambert's soldiers had got up to send to Parliament. Lambert was in Yorkshire at that time, and he was a Yorkshireman and had been a friend of Lord Fairfax's and had relieved Bradford in the Civil War and fought many fine battles and Captain Hodgson was still serving under him, and we had always trusted him; but now it seemed as if Monk, who had changed his side after that

battle long ago in Cheshire so that I never liked him, was supporting Parliament, while Lambert was against it; so I knew not whom to look to. Well, that day John was out at the side of the house making a new place for chickens for me, and I went out to see how the work was going, and stood watching for a little time. He was as skilful as ever with carpentry. I did not like to see him at such work at his age; but owing to the confused state of the country the cloth trade was in terrible straits, and we had to take thought about our outgoings and straiten our expenditure in many ways, and so he made this himself instead of hiring a man to do it for him. I mentioned the news about Monck which had come, and asked him what he thought of it, but he said nothing. I asked him other questions about political matters too, but got no reply; and so at last I burst out in a grieved tone:

"I am fairly puzzled, John, where to find our cause. What do you think of it all?"

"Why ask me?" muttered John, placing a nail very carefully, ready to strike it with the hammer.

"But John," I persisted: "which is in the right, Monck or Lambert?"

"I do not know," said John. "I do not know!" he shouted suddenly, and he gave me a strange angry glare, and threw down the hammer, and limped off into the house.

I followed very soberly, greatly troubled to think that a man so straight in purpose, so honest, decent and experienced, as my John, should not know which course was the right one.

Before I reached the house he came out again, holding another hammer in his hand; as he passed me he mumbled something to the effect that he had need of this hammer and had been obliged to fetch it. But this was all pretence; he could not meet my eyes, and spoke in a very conciliatory way; it was meant as a kind of apology for speaking to me harshly. I smiled and replied in a very friendly tone; but I must own, what is a strange interconnection of small things with great ones, that I have always disliked that

chicken-run, feeling always in it John's perplexity and distress.

Moreover, it was at this time that John began to suffer from a persistent thorn in the flesh, a very painful affection about his waist, which for long would not vanish, but came again whenever he was troubled, and so the sight of the chicken-run placed me always in mind of that also.

As the disorder of the country grew and grew, Sam and Will began to pour letters in on us, belabouring us with complaints and news and suppositions.

"I wish they would save their pence and our eyes," grumbled John, poring over one of Will's much-crossed epistles.

Sam's letters were at least plain and comprehensible in their words, though they related very variable feelings; for one week "the City" would be angered with the Parliament, and the next with the Army, and the next it would be sick and tired of both of them, according to Sam, and determined not to meddle with the dispute. Looking back on it now, this time reminds me of the house-end I saw fall in Kirk-gate in the first siege of Bradford. A stone fell, and another, and another, and then two or three, and then there came a kind of muffled cracking, and an awful pause, and then suddenly crash! down came the wall in a roar. The muffled crackings of impending dissolution were ever increasing in our ears, at that time.

Will, however, did not agree, and he wrote very often to tell us so. John complained jestingly at first that he wished Will would write plain English—he was growing as fond of texts as Lister, said John, but as became a scholar used much more obscure ones. Then John began to re-read the Book of Revelation, "in order to keep pace with thy brother's metaphors, wife," said he, smiling. But soon he jested no more about Will's letters, but handed them to me to read without a word, and made no comment on them; he was uneasy at their contents, and I shared this uneasiness. For Will, at first as distressed and perplexed as John and I were at the confusion of all we believed to be good, turned

naturally enough to Holy Writ for comfort, and compared the present troubles to the opening of that seventh seal from which such woes poured upon the children of men. This was natural enough, though I have ever thought it rash to force the mystical words of John the Divine into close earthly comparisons. Will, however, seemed determined so to force them; he delivered sermons, and wrote many letters to The Breck, comparing every small happening in Parliament and the Army to the *hail and fire mingled with blood*, or the *embittering of the waters of the earth by wormwood*, or the *darkening of the sun and air by reason of the smoke from the bottomless pit*, and other such matters from Revelation, so that it would have been ludicrous had it not been so lamentable. But then one unfortunate day poor Will got it into his head that the sentence of John the Divine which saith *they should be tormented five months* was strictly applicable to the present unsettlement of our nation. It was about the autumn of 1659, as I remember, when the Army had turned the Parliament out of doors; David sent me a very fine pamphlet against this shocking illegality, writ by an erstwhile Latin secretary to the Council of State, a poet, John Milton. From that day, which to the most of us seemed very gloomy, Will began to be cheerful and hopeful; and from that day his friends had cause to be distressed for him. He went about wagging his head and uttering mysterious prophecies of good days to come, as if he had special information about the future from the government or from God, which last he indeed believed himself to have, poor fellow. A brother minister, joking him, asked if he could tell the exact date of this consummation, whereupon Will with flashing eyes rebuked him and named a day. This day was several times postponed, as the months went by and no good settlement appeared, Will confessing, in public, very humbly and candidly that he was but a poor weak soul unfit to be the Lord's instrument, and he had understood imperfectly the message the Lord required him to deliver to His faithful people. Eliza was wretched over these continually deceived prophecies, and she begged me privately

to ask Will often to The Breck, for our quiet warm home life, with Abraham running in from school and drawing diagrams of looms to show the action of the reeds and treadles, and so on, soothed Will and seemed to drive away his sick fancies and restore him to ordinary life.

One snowy winter's afternoon Will came hurrying into The Breck with that wild light in his eyes which we had grown to dread, and cried out that the day of the Lord was at hand. I urged him to the fire and made him take off his boots, for snow-broth has the most astonishing ability to find its way through leather, and sent Abraham out to see if his' uncle had remembered to stable his horse—sure enough he had forgot it. But I had hardly got Will comfortable by the fire, and brought John down from the loom-chamber to have a word with him, when he was up and for the road again; he said he must spread the good news, it was laid on him to spread it all over the West Riding, John asking him very soberly and stolidly what this good news was, Will told him in a loud excited shout that the five months of torment had begun that very morning. He pursed his mouth with such determination as he said this, and his head seemed so to nod and tremble, that we did not like to contradict him, but gave his horse a feed of oats and let him go, Abraham on his own offer leading the horse by the bridle down the snowy lane and into Bradford. When he had gone I turned to John and asked what he thought of Will's carriage.

"Nay, Penninah, I think as thou dost," said John heavily.

"I fear his brain is turning," I whispered.

"He hath suffered much, and for many years," said John. "Do not forget he began to suffer before we married."

When Abraham came back from Bradford he brought news which caused John and I to look at each other strangely. For it was rumoured in Bradford that day that Lord Fairfax, ill though he was with gout and chill, had risen up and gathered some old soldiers together, and marched to meet Lambert at a rendez-vous on Marston Moor.

"At last, at last!" said John very quietly.

"Why," said I, shivering a little at the strangeness of it, "perhaps Will hath a message from the Lord, after all."

"Nay, Penninah," said John: "It is more like Will hath heard this rumour, and translated it. But yet he may be the Lord's instrument in the spreading of this news, that I do not deny."

"Lord Fairfax may indeed give us back our freedom in five months," said I.

"Aye, he may," said John soberly. "But do not count on it, Penninah. We do not much deserve it."

At first it seemed as if John were wrong and poor Will right, for most of Lambert's army, which was ready to march north to fight with Monck, at the sight and speech of their old general came over to him, while the rest mouldered away. Captain Hodgson was one of the officers who would not join Monck and Fairfax; he came home to Coley, very discontented, and when he rode over to The Breck to see us, justified his action, saying that he would never oppose Lambert or help to restore a King.

"Restore a King!" cried I. "There is no talk of such a thing, surely."

"There is talk of little else," snapped Hodgson.

"But Monck stands for a free Parliament," said I.

"Aye—free as it was before Noll purged it," grumbled Hodgson. "Such a Parliament will be very like to restore the King."

"I do not believe it," I told him firmly.

"What else can be done?" contended Hodgson peevishly.

"Now Lambert is out of the running, it is young Charles as King, or Monck for Protector, which you please. I do not know which would be the worse; perhaps you can tell me, Mrs. Thorpe."

"But there's Black Tom, d' you see," put in Isaac Baume, who was supping with us.

"Aye—now if Fairfax were Protector," began Hodgson more hopefully.

"Lord Fairfax will never take that unlawful office," said my husband quickly.

"England is likely to pay dear for his scruples," grumbled Hodgson.

He proved right, alas. Monck delayed so long in taking action of any kind, as I remember, that a great petition was signed in Yorkshire, imploring him to call a Parliament. In this petition, which was headed by Lord Fairfax—John signed it among others—there was a very sad reference to the decay and ruin of the cloth trade, which indeed at that time was almost dead. The Parliament was called, and Will was jubilant, but soon we began to have very mournful letters from Sam. Monck was made Commander-in-Chief of the Parliament's forces, and Lord Fairfax was a member of the new Council of State, but they seemed still undecided what was best to be done, and meanwhile many men began to clamour for the King's restoration. *I heard last night, wrote Sam, what I never in my life heard before, the King's health proposed openly at a banquet.* For my part, I was so sick and tired of all this endless turmoil, I did not greatly care, though I knew I ought to care, whether the King returned or not, so he ruled decently with a free Parliament and gave us a settled government. I had been weary of monarchy, but I was more weary of anarchy. I suppose many people in England felt the same.

Four of poor Will's five months went by. We heard that Parliament had voted the government of England to be by King and lords and commons; we heard that the young King had declared he would grant liberty of conscience to all his subjects, and a free and general pardon. Then we heard that Lord Fairfax had gone abroad to visit him. At this last piece of news we saw the Restoration, as men began to call it, was indeed upon us; we knew not whether to be glad or sorry, but held our tongues and went about our business quietly, with sore hearts. Not so Will, however; he was still sure that government by Parliament alone, and the full Presbyterian religion, would be established by a special act of Providence within the next four weeks. Argu-

ment with him was useless, for it seemed but to excite him, so that his speech grew confused and vehement, and his head began to nod.

One warm day of full spring there was an ordination held in Bradford Church. Will was one of the ministers appointed, after our Presbyterian fashion, to examine the young candidates and ordain them—he had not yet lost the respect his godly life had won him amongst his fellow ministers by his prophecies and mystical vagaries, though he was well on his way to doing so, poor Will. John and I were present at the ceremony, and I trembled whenever Will had to speak; for he was apt to mix both his words, putting the heads of some on the tails of others, and his ideas, so that several times his questions were unintelligible to the candidates, making them blush and hesitate, and once or twice there was a titter. But Will looked so honest and good, if ailing, with his pursed mouth and his nodding head and his harassed staring eyes, that he was mostly received with a tender respect. Nevertheless, I was glad when the ceremony was over.

Afterwards we had many guests to dinner at The Breck. There were several ministers from neighbouring churches, and our own new Bradford minister, Mr. Waterhouse, and Will and Eliza, and the Listers and the Baumes. Will seemed dazed when he reached our house, but recovered himself a little when he had taken some good homely meat and ale. I had put Abraham to help our maids with the serving, and told him to give special care to his uncle, which he did ably, yet without letting it be seen, being a very sweet-natured lad and neat in his ways.

“What is that sound, child?” said Will to him as Abraham brought round the jug of ale.

“I do not know, Uncle Will,” replied Abraham politely.

“Run to the door and listen,” commanded Will.

Abraham hesitated, for I think that, like myself, he heard no sound at all, but he went obediently to the door and set it ajar. He stood there a few moments, while doubtless

the sound grew louder, then returned and murmured courteously in his uncle's ear.

"Church bells?" said Will in a loud excited tone. "Church bells? Harken, Abraham; run to Little Holroyd and enquire why they think the bells are being rung and where."

Abraham looked to me for permission, and then ran off.

He was so long absent that to tell the truth I had forgot him, and we had left the table and were sitting about the hearth talking when at last he returned. He was flushed and untidy, as if he had run some way, and when I looked at him enquiringly over the heads of the guests, he very vehemently shook his head. Unluckily poor Will caught the direction of my glance, and saw him.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings!" he cried in his harsh uncertain voice. "Come, tell thy news."

"They knew naught of the bells in Little Holroyd, Uncle," said Abraham, trying to put him off.

"So then you went to Bradford," said Will, divining this from his tone; for indeed none of our children, thanks be to the Lord, has any skill in deception.

Abraham stood downcast, shuffling his feet, and seeing his trouble I intervened, bidding him fetch Mr. Baume a more comfortable chair. Abraham would have been off like an arrow, but Will would not be interrupted; he stretched out a ponderous hand and detained the boy.

"Why do the bells ring, Abraham?" he said in a pompous sermonising tone, glancing round at the rest of us to call our attention.

"'Tis the King's Restoration, Uncle Will," said poor Abraham reluctantly. "The wind is from the south—it is not Bradford church bells which are ringing. They say the King landed in England yesterday."

We kept a sad and perplexed silence, looking down. Into this silence there came a sudden loud wild groan. I turned, startled, to see Will, his face dark crimson, fall forward in his chair. Lister and I sprang to him and raised him; his

head lolled loose from side to side, his eyes were turned up to show the whites, he breathed very heavily and strangely.

Poor Will! He died in our house that night. It was an apoplexy, the physician said. I think Will's end became him; he was buried, or so it seemed to us then, with his cause.

THE SUN SHINES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HEDGE

WITHOUT PLEASURE, BUT with sober resignation, because we thought it our duty, we at The Breck tried to take a hopeful view of Charles II's return. As John said, the Restoration had been decreed by Parliament in proper legal form, and though there were some doubts as to the composition of the Parliament, still it was the lawfully constituted authority of the nation at the time, and we should therefore obey its will. The act of indemnity passed by the new government, too, seemed to hold out some prospects of mutual forgiveness and true peace, and it was right that we should strive to advance these prospects. Lister, however, from the first took a different view.

"Put not your trust in princes," he growled, whenever he heard John voicing his belief in the propriety of obedience to the new government.

"The Lord allowed His chosen people to have a king," argued John.

"Aye, but not a Stuart king," said Lister. "They are all sons of Belial, liars and whoremongers and breakers of their pledged word."

"This one hath not been tried yet," said John.

"Like father, like son," persisted Lister.

"That is not in Holy Writ," John told him quietly.

We were all the more inclined to keep to this hopeful outlook on the future because, the Bradford Grammar School receiving a new Charter from the King at that time, in spite of his Parliament service John was one of the former Committee included in the new governors, while both David and Thomas received preferment this year. David was called to

give the Morning Exercises at that church of St. Giles in Cripplegate where he had preached so notably at our Sam's wedding, while Thomas, to our great joy, was offered the pulpit left vacant by Will at Adel. Thomas was both nominated by the former patron of the living, a relation of Lord Fairfax's, and heartily approved by the congregation; he took up his ministry there very earnestly, and seemed highly regarded, and thought very serviceable to the Lord, by the Adel people. He lived at Adel, but came over to see us very regularly, which was a great joy to his parents. Poor Eliza, too, renewed her life by dwelling with him and keeping house for him; as she had never had a child, save the little babe who died, she lavished all her motherly love upon Thomas. Our son would sometimes smile a little at his aunt's excessive care of him, but there was a great strength of grace in Thomas, he always said and did exactly what he meant, and was not apt to be driven off a pre-determined course by slight vexations of temper. He therefore behaved always to Eliza with a steady gentle courtesy and affection which were very pleasant to see.

John and I went to Adel to hear Thomas preach his first sermon there one summer Lord's Day. I own I was excited and somewhat tremulous, to think of my own son, my first-born child, preaching to the large congregation assembled there that day, and I could see that John was also very much moved, though he was not one to show his feelings in a public assembly. Thomas was the first Thorpe to occupy a pulpit, and John was justly proud that his family had offered a son to the service of the Lord. Most mothers, I think, are anxious when their children have to perform some public act, and my heart beat fast when Thomas gave out his text, *which was Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people*. But I need not humble myself; he laid out the various heads with such clarity, such strong faith where true, that I was quite amazed at him. He was as bold in his discourse as David did, for he was as bold of the Thorpe practicality; but he was as bold of strength. He looked handsomely; altogether I was greatly

So we were eager to be hopeful about the King's return, and we continued to indulge these hopes right up to the day of the King's Coronation. Trade was a little brisker then than it had been, many people feeling hopeful like ourselves, and Lister, I remember, came up to The Breck that forenoon about a couple of pieces which he wanted to send to market on the morrow. He and John fell into their usual argument upon Charles II, and Lister ranting, as usual, against the Stuart kings, John lost patience with him.

"I never saw you fighting for the Commonwealth very eagerly, Lister," said he drily. "You were steward and agent and merchant, I think, while I was soldier."

Lister sniffed indignantly and went off muttering.

"Think you truly we shall be let live free and quiet, John?" I asked when he had gone.

"How do I know? It is all to try for. As long as Black Tom thinks there is a hope of it, I will hope for it too," said John.

This he said because Lord Fairfax had given the King a horse to ride at the Coronation, a horse from his own stud, a foal of the mare he rode at Naseby. The King accepted it and rode on it to be crowned, and this was thought to be very hopeful for a true peace, a reconciliation of all former enemies; in Bradford we rejoiced.

But alas! Lister's gloomy croakings were nearer the mark than John's honest impartiality. The Coronation was barely over, it seemed, before proceedings were begun against those men who had signed the late King's death warrant, the Regicides as they were now called; and some were put to death, and the bodies of those already deceased were dragged out from their graves—Sam wrote very bitterly to us that he had seen Cromwell's body dragged at the cart-tail to Tyburn, where felons were wont to be executed, and what seemed worse to him, the body of Oliver's mother, old Mrs. Cromwell, torn out of its coffin and thrown naked into an ill-dug pit in Westminster. (It seemed no worse to me to dig up Mrs. Cromwell than Oliver, but I have often noticed that men resent indignities to women far more than any insult to themselves. I cannot see why it should be worse to kill a

woman than a man, all killing being equally abhorrent to me; but men do not think thus yet, though perhaps they will come to do so some day.) Lord Fairfax was bitterly angry, we heard, at this breaking of the new King's promises; he asked indignantly why, if these other Regicides were to be put to death, he himself should escape, seeing that he was in command of the Parliament's army at the time of the late King's trial. But Lord Fairfax had not been present at the trial, as all men knew, which this King Charles II made an excuse for not prosecuting him; the true reason being that no man, even a restored Stuart, dared persecute Lord Fairfax, for fear of an uproar among the people. Lord Fairfax left the Court, however, and came home to Nun Appleton, not choosing to be the witness of behaviour he thought so evil.

Seeing the example set to them by their betters in London, our local Royalists began to carry things with a high hand. They persecuted Captain Hodgson continually, citing him to the court for his lightest word, accusing him of treason and conspiracy and this and that, till he was forever in and out of gaol and appearing before the magistrates. John was a staunch friend to him, standing bond for him many a time, riding on his behalf to Bradford and Halifax and York, though with his lame knee and his painful affection much riding was become a troublous business for him. All this John did with a kind of stolid persistent obstinacy, not happy in it, nor hopeful, but just going on steadily because it was the right thing to do. It was not a happy time in any sense for my poor John; trade was a little better but not much, the Dutch still being very difficult, and he seemed to have lost some of his pride in it now that he made but half a dozen pieces a week; moreover, he was endlessly troubled over Holroyd Hall. He often lamented to me that his Uncle Giles was not alive now, for then all these Hall troubles would have been smoothed away; and I too wished that Giles might have lived to see his King restored. The papers, the letters, the declarations before magistrates, the evasions and demands of tenants, the arguments over long-paid fines, which

poor John had to wrestle with in connection with Holroyd Hall, now that he belonged to the losing side, were enough to daunt any but the most stout-hearted man. He won through it all gradually, and proved his title and Chris's, and made a profitable lease of the land. (For the Hall itself, that stood empty for many a long year, nobody in the neighbourhood being prosperous enough to take it on.) But at this time of which I am thinking, what with Captain Hodgson in troubles before one set of magistrates, and declarations about Holroyd Hall to be made before another, and some malicious persons trying to oust John from his steward's employment, and Lister continually lamenting to him about the poor prospects of cloth, and the public news continually worsening for all of our persuasion, it was a dreary, dispiriting, sickening time for John.

And then one night when we were all abed there came a sudden thunderous knocking at our door. It was painful for John to move quickly, so I sprang up and threw a cloak round me and opened the casement and called out to know who was there.

"Open in the King's name!" was the shouted answer.

My heart sank. Are we to have a sack again, I wondered despairingly; and I feared greatly what might happen to John if it were so, for he would not be able to endure it quietly, his temper being somewhat short of late, with pain and disappointment. So I said hastily:

"It is some soldiers, I think. I will go down."

"No—no, Penninah," commanded John. "Tell them I will come down to see them as soon as I have made a light."

I called down this message, and looked out more carefully at the men below; in the moonlight I could see they were a party of horse. They now dismounted and gathered round our porch, with a jingling of bits and ringing of spurs.

"Speak them fair, John," I whispered as he passed me; for indeed I felt I could not bear any further misfortune.

John did not answer, but limped down the stairs and unbarred the door. I followed him and lit a candle.

"Now, sirs," said John in a level but stern and commanding tone, standing in the doorway: "Be so good as to tell me by what right you disturb honest folk at this time of the night?"

"'Tis not our fault we are late," said the man at their head, who seemed not to be a soldier: "If your sleep is disturbed blame the other Roundheads who delayed us."

There seemed something familiar in his impudent tones, and I was not much surprised when John said:

"Were you not once clerk to the ulnager, Mr. Metcalfe?"

"Aye, I am Jeremy Scaife," said the other, swaggering. "You and I have had our little disagreements before, Mr. Thorpe. But as I was saying to Captain Hodgson only the other day, the sun now shines on our side of the hedge, Mr. Thorpe."

"Why," said John pleasantly: "It is true the Lord sends rain on both the just and the unjust, so doubtless He sends sunshine also."

At this there was a slight sniggering among the men, and Scaife was angered.

"I could inform against you for treason for saying that!" he cried out angrily.

"Come, Mr. Scaife," said John impatiently: "You are keeping women and children from their beds. To business."

I looked about surprised, as he said this, and saw that both our two maids and Abraham were clustered behind me.

"I am clerk to the magistrates now, and I have come for your arms; you are to deliver them to me," said Scaife.

"Come in," said John, standing back: "And show me your order."

"I have a better order than Oliver used to give," cried Scaife. He clapped his hand on the sword he wore, and cried: "This is my order."

"If you have none but that, it is not sufficient," said John steadily.

At this Scaife pulled out a warrant from his doublet and handed it to John, who read it all through from beginning to end, while I held the candle for him.

"It is a general order, to search all suspected persons,"

said John, looking up when he had finished. "Of what and by whom am I suspected?"

"Now, Mr. Thorpe," said Scaife, swaggering up to the table and throwing down his gloves there: "It is useless to resist a warrant, don't you know that? There has been a plot against His Majesty's life, and we have orders to search for arms at the houses of all suspected persons."

"Search away," said John grimly. "You will find only a couple of muskets and a fowling piece."

"And what of your buff-coat, Mr. Thorpe?" said Scaife in the impudent pretentious tone he now affected.

At this John, who hitherto had seemed calm and indifferent, started and coloured.

"You have no order to take away my apparel," he said quickly.

"A buff-coat is arms, not apparel," said Scaife, delighted to have moved him.

"You shall not have it!" shouted John suddenly.

"If you resist my warrant I shall carry you away a prisoner!" shouted Scaife in reply. He was a long thin personage, and he towered over John threateningly.

"You shall not have my buff-coat," said John, his breathing very heavy.

"Outside with you then, and to prison!" cried Scaife in a fury, and he shouted at two of the soldiers and made them come and stand with John between them. They obeyed him sheepishly. "Outside! Outside!" he screamed. "You are my prisoner!"

"Take me to prison, then!" shouted John, totally losing his temper, so that his voice coarsened and his face grew darkly crimson. "I care not! You shall not have my buff-coat, in which I fought under my General."

"Rebel and traitor!" screamed Scaife. "Outside!" He snatched up one of our muskets, which the troopers had laid on the table, and made to strike John with it across the shoulders to urge him forward.

"Mr. Scaife, Mr. Scaife!" I cried in terror, throwing myself between them. "For God's sake! I beg of you! You shall

have the coat—Abraham,” I cried, turning to the child: “Fetch your father’s buff-coat from the closet.”

Abraham, not understanding anything but that his father was in danger, ran off hastily, then hesitated, turned, and said in his young piping tones:

“Which is the buff-coat, Mother?”

“It is wrapped in linen, with spices, hanging at the back of the closet,” I whispered. “Bring it quickly.”

“Aye, go; go, child,” said John suddenly, sinking down on the bench by the table and burying his face in his hands: “Go and do thy mother’s bidding.”

Abraham ran off up the stairs. It seemed hours before he came down again with the buff-coat clasped close to him. I took the coat and, not looking at John, I gave it to his enemy.

Scaife mumbled a word or two, then bade his soldiers pick up the arms and come with him. We heard them outside, mounting.

I knew not where to go or how to look, but, not holding up my head, for indeed I could not, drove the maids and Abraham back to bed with a few words of scolding. Abraham was restless and disturbed by the night’s work, and would not settle; he abounded in speculations about the soldiers and the buff-coat, and when I turned him from that began to ask me a familiar question of his since Chris’s departure. It was one on which John could not bear to hear him, namely: what like was the sea? I was afraid to feed the longing to travel which I supposed lay behind his anxiety, either by denying him or telling him, but he gave me his first hint of his true preoccupation with the sea that night, being excited and so revealing his nature’s secrets, by saying:

“On the sea they guide themselves by the stars, Mother.”

At the time I took little notice of this, being full of care about John and anxious to return to him; I said merely:

“Well, let it be so; it doth not concern you, Abraham.”

“Aye, but it doth,” said Abraham softly.

When at last I reached our chamber, John was there before me. He was sitting on the edge of the bed, his hands

spread on his knees, his shoulders bowed, gazing ahead of him. I saw by his posture that he was suffering.

"Art in pain, lad?" I said, sitting beside him.

He lunched his shoulders and let them fall again, as if to imply that he did not care for pain.

"John, I gave the coat only to save thee," I faltered.

"I know," said John. "I know." He drew a deep breath and sighed very heavily, then he turned to me and said: "Well, wife; it seems we are defeated."

There were tears in his eyes, and he looked so old and sad and worn that I could not bear it; I put my arms about him and said:

"Never mind, love."

"But I do mind, Penninah," fretted John. "It is my whole life. It is all my life. My life is wasted."

"Nay, John," said I: "There are the children."

But all night long he lay with his head on my breast, talking of his lost cause, and would not be comforted.

BUT THE CAUSE IS NOT DEAD

IT WAS DURING this sad and depressing time, when John was both dejected in spirit and pained in body, that he made his mistake about our Abraham. It was a very natural error, founded on affection and the happenings of the times, and Abraham himself presently repaired it, but it caused us some heartburnings before it was set right.

The error was in apprenticing Abraham to a mercer in York. John in his present dejection despaired of the cloth trade. He had never done this before, saying always, however bad it was, that it must recover, for men must be clothed; but now he lost hope of this as of our cause. Abraham therefore was not to be a clothier, he declared emphatically; nor should he be a minister, for both to put him through Cambridge would cost too much and Abraham himself, though a well behaved and Christian lad enough, cared not for sermons or theological matters.

"Besides," said John gloomily: "This Charles who throws out bodies will put us out of the Church one way or another before we are much older."

So John determined to apprentice Abraham to some merchant, and it should be in some town near at hand. For John loved Abraham very dearly—Sam indeed was apt to say that Abraham's name should have been Benjamin, and sometimes called him so in jest. John could not endure to be parted from the child by his going to London, as he was from Sam; besides, in his secret heart I think he was afraid that once in London, Abraham might take to the sea in Chris's footsteps, for he did not understand the true meaning of Abraham's talk of the sea any more than I did at that time.

I must own that I never understood Abraham as I did my other children. In saying so once to John over this business of the apprenticeship, he replied shortly:

"And yet of all four he resembles thee the most."

I was astonished at this, and next time Abraham was nigh, I looked at him very closely. He was a handsome lad in a way, so that John's observation was flattering; he had my clear pale skin, I could see that, and perhaps my abundance of dark waving hair; moreover his body was slender and well formed, with agreeable hands and feet, like my father's. But he had a high forehead and a pair of brilliant eyes such as I laid no claim to, and a half smile always on his lips, somewhat like Lord Fairfax's only more ironical. In spirit he was remote and reserved and solitary—I thought, like John; it was disconcerting to find John thought it like me! When Abraham entered a room, you always noticed his coming; there was a secret fire in the lad of which you caught glimpses, as it were, through crevices. It is absurd to speak of feeling awe for one's own children, perhaps, and yet I always felt somewhat clumsy and abashed before Abraham; his mind seemed off somewhere on the fringes of the world, busy with things beyond my understanding. Then his skill with figures was so great as to be almost magical.

Abraham did not wish to be apprenticed to a merchant, either in Leeds or York or anywhere else, though he might put up with it, he hinted, if it were in London. He wished to go to Cambridge University and study mathematics there.

"And what in Heaven's name would you do for a livelihood afterwards?" said John.

"I could be a tutor, perhaps," Abraham offered thoughtfully.

"Tutors are half-starved miserable beings with no proper home of their own," said John.

"I don't eat much, Father," said Abraham seriously.

There was something so childish and trusting about this that John's ill-temper was cured for that time; but soon they were at it again, Abraham wanting to go to Cambridge and John refusing him.

"If you go to the south you will stay there, like Sam and your Uncle David, and Thomas for many years," said John, "and we shall never see you more."

"If it was right for Uncle David and Sam and Thomas to go, why should it be wrong for me?" countered Abraham.

"He is right, John," I ventured to argue, when John and I were alone together. "It is his life—he hath as much right to go as Sam or Thomas."

"I cannot afford it, Penninah!" shouted John angrily. "I tell you I cannot find the money! You seem to think I am made of gold."

Although I did not quite believe it, against this plea of poverty there was nothing to be said; so I directed myself to begging John to look for a place where Abraham's skill in numeration would be serviceable.

"It will be highly serviceable in a mercer's," said John. "Yards and half-yards of stuffs at various prices, and discounts and profits and so on—he will be at figures all day long."

I told this to Abraham, who made a grimace and remarked that it was no pleasure to him to do sums when they were easy. This seemed such a strange thing to say, so opposite to the general notions of humanity, which ever seeks the easiest way, that I was perplexed and troubled.

"You are a strange one," I said: "You make me fear for your future, son."

"Why, never mind, Mother," said Abraham consolingly, for he was a kindly gentle lad: "I shall find a way. But since 'tis from Father I have my gift of figures, it is hard he will not let me cultivate it. He wants me to bury my talent in a napkin, which is very unScriptural—tell him that, Mother."

But there was no telling anything to John in his then state of mind, and so, though my conscience troubled me, warning me that I was not doing my duty by Abraham, I was obliged to let him go. John found him a place in York, and took him thither himself when he had cloth business there.

"They are very honest godly folk," he said when he returned: "And I think they will like of Abraham."

"Aye; but will he like of them?" I thought, but I did not venture to say so, John being so unhappy then over both private and public affairs.

For it seemed he was right, and our cause defeated, every day that passed bringing some disagreeable turn of oppression by the restored Cavaliers. And then, only two years after Charles had made all those fine promises about liberty of conscience, as John had prophesied, the King threw those of our persuasion out of the ministry. An Act was passed through Parliament for enforcing uniformity in the Church. By this act, the Prayer Book was the only form of service allowed to be used, ordination by Bishops was the only ordination recognised; every person in holy orders was required to read the Prayer Book service aloud to his congregation and swear his assent to it, before a certain Lord's Day in August; moreover, he was required to swear also that it was unlawful under any pretence whatever to take arms against the King. It was indeed a crushing blow to all those of our persuasion.

Unfortunately John had this Act battered upon his ears at all hours of the day and night, for the first few weeks after its passing, and indeed for long enough afterwards. Our Bradford minister, Jonas Waterhouse, a good creature enough but as this proved somewhat weak and uncertain, was greatly distressed by the choice this Act of Uniformity imposed on him, and could not make up his mind whether to conform, as it was called, or not. Now John was steward to the southern lady who owned the tithes and the presentation of the Bradford living; during the Commonwealth and Protectorate her presentation was in abeyance and we chose our own ministers, but now she took it back again, and as that odious former minister of ours, Mr. Corker, was also claiming that he was still Vicar of Bradford Church, the matter was very difficult. All the parties concerned wrote to John; Lady Maynard wrote, and Mr. Corker wrote, and Mr. Waterhouse rode up daily to our house to argue the

matter. And whereas Lady Maynard, a very godly honest woman though of the Royalist and Episcopal persuasion, was ready to leave Mr. Waterhouse in possession if he would conform, Mr. Waterhouse would not say either yea or nay, and Mr. Corker was very vehement against him; so John was much harassed, and the painful affliction he suffered from grew very troublesome.

One day about a fortnight after we heard of the passing of the Act, Mr. Waterhouse being with John in the house-place as usual, the carrier came up to our back door and handed me a package. It was so tied and sealed, and the paper so yellowed, with brown stains here and there, and the writing so faint and blotched, that I could hardly make out what it was and wondered that it had reached me. But when I had paid the man and cut the strings and unfolded it my heart gave a great leap; for it was a letter from Chris. Yes, it was a letter from my dear son Chris, the first word I had had of him since he left us four years ago. It was ill-spelled and not well expressed, but full of life and happiness, and it seemed from what it said as if I should have received earlier letters from him, but perhaps they had gone astray. (Or perhaps he only meant to write them; I know my Chris.) He told of great mountains, wide plains, huge curving rivers; of tobacco plantations, Indians, negroes and other such strange matters, of which I could not even form to myself a picture. He had travelled far, and had many adventures up and down that great country on many fine *horses*, it seemed; but now he was settled in a place at the mouth of the James River—but *itt is not a rivver as you knwo rivvers*, Mother, he wrote: *things in Bradford are multiplied here by ten, nay by ten thousand rather. Abraham will doe the numeration for you*, Mother, wrote my Chris, joking. *The peopell here are very kind to me*, wrote Chris, *and I am resouled to settle here if poscibell for I am content to be here it is poscibell I may make a moreedge. Remember me lovingly to my Father and Brothers*, went on Chris, and signed himself: *Your dear Sonne, Christopher Thorpe*.

I laughed and cried over this letter, and made to run to

John to show it him, but was deterred by the sound of Mr. Waterhouse's voice, excited and booming, so I went up to my chamber, and took to my knees and thanked Almighty God for His great mercies; and when I heard Mr. Waterhouse leave at last, I went downstairs smiling.

But John was sitting by the hearth looking so hunched and bowed and wretched that I had not the courage to be cheerful with him.

"There is a letter from Christopher, John," I said timidly, laying it beside him.

John took it up and turned it over indifferently. "He was ever a poor speller," he said when he had read it to the close. "What is a *moredge*, think you?"

"Nay, I do not know," I said, pleased to hear him make even this comment, though it was not much to say to a letter which had come after four years' silence out of Virginia. I enlarged upon Chris a little, saying that his good home training would stand him in good stead in the new land, and so on, but John made no reply, sitting gazing silently into the fire. So at last I fell silent, too, and sighed, and looked at him sadly.

After a while I said: "What troubles you, John?"

"This Act—this Act," he muttered.

"Why do you fret over it so, lad?" I asked him.

He was silent, but seemed to want to speak, and at last he got out: "We do not hear from Thomas."

So then I pressed him no further, for I knew his trouble, and it was my trouble too. From David we had heard, but not from Thomas.

But it was wrong of us not to trust our son, for that very afternoon he came riding up to The Breck. We greeted him joyfully—at least, I greeted him joyfully; John seemed sunk in himself and found few words for his eldest son—and I showed him Chris's letter. He rejoiced greatly over it, smiling and exclaiming.

"What is a *moredge*, think you?" said I to him.

"Why, it is a marriage, for sure," cried Thomas laughing. "Fancy our Chris married!"

"He will want the money for his land, then," said John crossly. "He is over-young for marriage."

"Why, Father," said Thomas, "he will be nineteen in September. Some woman will have great joy of him," mused Thomas kindly.

At this my poor John's face quivered, and he raised himself in his chair, and said in a hoarse voice:

"What of this new Act?"

Thomas lost his smile at once. "The Act of Uniformity?" he said gravely.

"Aye—aye," said John. He bent forward and stared eagerly at Thomas, craving speech from him, but he was not able to wait for it, and went on: "What shalt do?"

"I shall not conform," said Thomas quietly.

At this John's face was illuminated with joy; and he seemed to draw himself together and become a strong steady man again—and indeed, what was very strange, his painful affliction began to recover from that moment and never returned though his rheumatism stayed by him; and he grew kindly again, and even-tempered, so that the house was pleasant.

"Why, lad, I am proud of thee," cried John. "I am proud of thee!"

He stood up and went to Thomas and put his hand on his shoulder, caressing it.

"Why, Father," said Thomas, looking up at him: "Surely you and my mother did not doubt me?"

"Nay, nay," said John hastily; and I added:

"But we are glad to hear it from your own lips, Thomas."

"If you had chosen to conform, I should not have blamed you, Thomas," explained John carefully. "This is our cause, not yours; we had no right to expect that you should take it up."

"Not so, Father," said Thomas steadily. "The cause of justice and freedom is not the possession of a single generation; it is an endless patrimony."

"You should have told us this sooner, Thomas," I mildly reproached him.

"Why," said Thomas: "As to conforming or not conforming, I never had any hesitation; but as to my duty after I am ejected from my parish, I have had much heart-searching."

"The Breck is not so poor it cannot sustain my son, Thomas," his father told him. "You can continue your studies, or perhaps become a tutor."

"No," said Thomas. "After much prayer, I have made my decision. I shall continue my ministry, so long as it is wished for."

"That is against the law, son," said John doubtfully.

"I know, I know," said Thomas. "But it is a matter of conscience with me, Father."

This is John and the ulnage over again, I thought; and I understood now how old Mr. and Mrs. Thorpe had felt on that matter. For Thomas's words began for me ten long years of continual anxiety—ten years during which my son was never safe.

"If you approve," went on Thomas, "I will minister from The Breck; if you do not, I will house myself elsewhere."

"The Breck is your home, Thomas," said John and I together.

"There will be heavy penalties, perhaps," said Thomas.

"I know, I know," said John impatiently. After a moment he went on: "What think you of that clause of the Act declaring it unlawful to take arms against the King?"

"Armed rebellion against a lawfully constituted authority," said Thomas in his clear tones very precisely, for he had plainly thought much on all these questions, "is a terrible thing, almost never to be undertaken; but to exact an oath that it shall never be undertaken is to make the mildest rule a tyranny."

"Thou art right, lad," said John with great satisfaction: "Thou hast hit the nail fair and square. It is our political freedom they are cutting at, as well as the religious, just as of old. The welfare of the people is the supreme law of nations, to which all other man-made laws must bow. Well!

When wilt come to The Breck, eh? The day after Black Bartholomew?"

This he said because, the day by which the conforming oath had to be sworn chancing to coincide with that Bartholomew's Day in France when so many Protestants had been massacred in the last century, those of our persuasion called this the new Bartholomew.

John and I went over to Adel to hear Thomas's last sermon as rector of his parish. He preached on a text from the Psalms: *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him*; a very apt text which he expounded in a clear ringing voice, very beautifully and nobly. The congregation was much moved, and crowded about him at the close of the service, lamenting his departure, so that John and I felt a great if mournful pride in him.

Next Lord's Day was Bartholomew, and nigh on two thousand ministers were ejected from their parishes. Of these two thousand, David Clarkson and Thomas Thorpe were two.

It was a terrible stroke to me, to think of David and Thomas, our noblest and our best, being thus driven out of usefulness and silenced; while on the other side too our brightest and most joyous, Chris, was lost to England. There is ever a great waste in strife and war, I thought, on both sides; my father and Will distraught, Francis dead, John crippled, David and Thomas persecuted, Chris as it were banished—our family hath suffered very bitterly because men could not compose their differences peaceably. But it is not possible to compose a difference between right and wrong, I thought; one can only fight evil, by one method or another; and a civil persecution can wound the spirit as much as war does the body.

David wrote that he should sustain himself chiefly by tutoring, and should study and write works of theological scholarship, ministering when it was required of him; Sam and Constance had offered him a home, which he accepted gladly. Thomas came to The Breck and prepared to begin his ministry.

I own, though I am ashamed to own it, that I was troubled at the notion of Eliza's coming to live with us. The Breck had been her home before it had been mine—I knew this and admitted it, but found it difficult to believe it in my heart, and still more difficult to relish it. But there was naught else to be done; Thomas and Eliza both came to us, and I did my best to be a true sister to her. And, as sometimes happens, what I had dreaded proved no discomfort at all, but rather a blessing; for as it turned out, Thomas's ministry kept the house so full and busy, I was truly glad of Eliza's help in managing it. For we held worship in our house every Lord's Day, though at different hours from the Church so that believers could attend both services if they had a stomach for Mr. Corker, and on the appointed Fasting Days, and sometimes on other days as well, for godly folk flocked as doves to the window to hear the instruction of the ejected ministers. Then, too, other ministers constantly passed through our house on the way to holding services, while Thomas constantly rode about the country on religious duty. It grew very familiar to me to hear a quiet knock at our door, Thomas's clear steady voice asking what was wanted, a low-toned answer; then Thomas coming in to say he had been asked to go to Penistone, or Guiseley, or Leeds (this was a very Royalist dangerous place), or to Halifax, or Wakefield, and preparing to ride off these considerable distances no matter what the weather; sometimes he rode even into Lancashire and Cheshire and was some days absent from his home. Joseph Lister was very forward in all this business; he attended our meetings very regularly, and also when he was in other towns on his merchant trade, he told the godly folk there of our Thomas as a very helpful serviceable preacher.

"He was born the day my indentures terminated," Lister was wont to say of Thomas, proudly.

With these frequent ridings back and forth, and with instructing Lister's boy David, and writing letters, and constant studying and preaching and composing sermons, our Thomas grew very thin and worn in looks, being so

continuously overtoiled; but he would not spare himself, and it was my part and Eliza's to keep him well clothed and fed despite his preoccupations.

When the government saw that this Act did not serve to keep us down, on the pretext of a plot against the King supposed to be wrought up by some foolish persons in Yorkshire—though we heard nothing of it—it passed another Act, forbidding more than five persons from outside a household to assemble therein for prayer. The penalties for anyone caught attending a conventicle, as any religious meeting was now called if attended by more than five strangers, were truly terrible, not only heavy fines and long imprisonment, but even transportation; Thomas, however, made no difference in his ministry. When I ventured, not without tears, to point out to him the danger he was running, he merely set his jaw as John did, and said:

"I shall minister wherever I am called, Mother."

I remember one night especially when he was to preach at Captain Hodgson's, and we rode over with him and dined there. After we had dined, many neighbours came in to hear him, so that the house was full, and Thomas was very fervent in prayer and exhortation. But while we were on our knees, suddenly a child came in, so that we all started; a kind and godly woman, wife to one of Captain Hodgson's Royalist neighbours, had sent him to warn us that one of the magistrates was coming upon us with a troop of horse. The congregation all rose up in confusion, but Thomas set his jaw in his father's way and stood there motionless, and I believe he would have continued to conduct the service, only Captain Hodgson desired him somewhat peremptorily to put an end to it. The Captain hustled us all out of doors by the back way, and he drew out Thomas's horse and saddled it very expeditiously and bade him ride hard if he valued his own liberty and his congregation's.

"Those who preach and run away, will live to preach another day," said Captain Hodgson, laughing.

At this Thomas smiled faintly and galloped off in the direction of Halifax. The Hodgsons' neighbours had already

dispersed, walking away very rapidly, and John and I were left looking at each other.

"I am sorry to turn you out thus, old friends," said Captain Hodgson, bringing out our horse and wheeling him to the mounting-block: "But indeed it will be best."

So we mounted and rode off through the moonlight; and sure enough, we had hardly reached the main road before we heard the horses' hoofs, and jingling of bits and spurs, as the troop rode up from the other direction and surrounded Coley Hall. I trembled so I could hardly sit the horse, and clung to John in a very timid manner, for which I despised myself. However, we got off safe and reached The Breck without being molested.

It is a true saying that misfortunes rarely come singly, for next morning, while we were still in doubt as to whether Thomas had escaped or not, behold an angry letter from the mercer at York where Abraham was apprenticed, saying that Abraham had broken his indentures and fled. John was quite dumbfounded; I do not know which was the more intolerable to him, the idea that a child of his should break indentures, or the thought of his cherished youngest son homeless and starving, roaming the countryside. I too was surprised, for Abraham had stayed in York nigh on three years, so I thought he had settled down. But somehow I was not troubled about Abraham; people always seemed to confide in him, and he listened with a grave attention which endeared him to them, and then he did not demand much of life, asking only to be left alone to manipulate columns of figures, so that it was easy to satisfy him. Though naturally anxious, I felt sure he would fall on his feet. But for Thomas I was greatly troubled. If Thomas came into contact with soldiers nowadays, he would vex them; he had a stern and lofty air, which soldiers do not like, and was apt to be very uncompromising in his speech. I had thoughts of him being attacked and wounded, imprisoned, tried, transported to some far plantation, dying of fever or beaten and starved. John, on the other hand, though naturally concerned for

Thomas, felt a pride in him which overrode concern. To John, Thomas was his representative, carrying on the good old cause; he did not wish Thomas, for he had not wished himself, to shrink from any hardship. So John and I sat on either side of our hearth that day, each worrying over a different son. Eliza between us shook her head and sighed with both of us dolefully, sympathising with John because he was her brother and with me because it was Thomas for whom I grieved.

It was two days before we heard that Thomas had got safe to Rochdale, and two weeks before we received a neat brief note in Abraham's beautiful penmanship to tell us he had gone to Liverpool.

"Liverpool!" cried John, inflamed. "He will take a ship thence, I suppose!"

He wanted to rush off to Liverpool at once himself and fetch Abraham home, but I persuaded him to send and command Thomas, who was still in Lancashire, to go instead and take money to the boy, and after some grumbling John agreed. It was well he did so, for when Thomas returned he came alone, bringing us a brave account of Abraham's going on in Liverpool. He had opened a school, said Thomas, for the teaching of writing and accounts.

"A school!" groaned John, nevertheless not altogether displeased. "A school at his age!"

"He is seventeen, Father," said Thomas seriously: "and you know his ability in numeration."

Abraham was studying the science of navigation, too, said Thomas, which was why he had gone to Liverpool, and he had made the acquaintance of some merchant who knew an astronomer who lived in London.

"An astronomer!" said John, much struck.

"Yes. It seems Abraham desires to be an astronomer," explained Thomas.

"What is an astronomer, brother?" asked Eliza mildly.

"Why, he studies the stars," said John. "But in truth I have never met one. You have brought me some strange children, Penninah," he grumbled, smiling at me however.

"There is not one stays peacefully at home as a sober clothier."

"You did not stay very peacefully at home yourself, husband," said I.

"Why, that is very true," said John. "And so I will not grumble. And now, tell us of your own travels, Thomas."

In the years which followed, this sentence was spoken, how many, many times! For the government had yet another blow in store for us. When it was found that no prohibition kept congregations from repairing to their ejected ministers for instruction, it was determined to put this out of their power. And so that hateful, cruel and most tyrannical Act was passed, forbidding ministers to reside within five miles of any place where they had ever exercised their ministry, and also forbidding them, except when travelling, to come within the same distance of any corporate city or town. David had to leave his refuge with Sam; he betook himself into the country, and God knows how he lived—he would not take any support from us or from Sam, though it was willingly offered him. Adel was mercifully more than five miles from Little Holroyd, but because Thomas had preached once or twice in Bradford Church, and Bradford was a town, there was always a doubt whether Thomas might reside at home or no. As for the other ministers of the West Riding, many of them had to turn out and move their families to a strange place, being already without any means of livelihood except that furnished to them by the faithful; so that their hardship was very great. Others left their wives and children in their old homes, and journeyed out themselves, returning home only for visits so brief that they could not be regarded as a residence. To many of these did we give hospitality in their endless journeyings, and hospitality was given by many to Thomas. Thomas kept a journal of his travels at his father's request, with the places and miles and the duties he performed writ down each day very carefully; this journal, when he looked through it the other day, revealed that in these hard years he preached more than six hundred sermons and travelled more than five thousand miles.

And while he travelled those miles and preached those sermons, growing thinner and more haggard every day, I thought of him. Often I lay awake at night and thought of those I loved who were bowed beneath this trial; David poor and comfortless—for I knew what his keeping himself by tutoring and studies meant, he would give all to the studies and none to the tutoring—Thomas toiling wearily up and down the hills. When the wind roared and the rain streamed, when the snow lay thick on the ground and the hail rattled on our windows, I lay awake at night, thinking of Thomas on horseback between one meeting place and the next, cold and tired and far from home. And I said to myself: Will this tribulation never end? How long, O Lord, how long?

It was during these years, shortly after the passing of the hated Five-Mile Act, that Eliza married again—a very decent sober minister, an elderly man, widowed, who passed through our house often on his pilgrimages of service. As his ministry had been in Cumberland, he was able to live in Adel, where most of Eliza's friends were, and John helped them to arrange Eliza's affairs and settle in a house there, and he gave up wandering and ministered very little, living on Eliza's rents, and their marriage was a quiet blessing and happiness to both of them.

John and I were left therefore somewhat lonely at The Breck; we had plenty of the company of ministers, for our house was a noted place of call for them, but none of our own kin about us. For Thomas was perpetually wandering; and Abraham's letters, very beautifully writ and describing all the doings of the port of Liverpool in a very precise and detailed manner, though not telling us much of his private feelings revealed that he was very well established and satisfied with his place, and meant to go to London presently; so that it would have been foolish to call him home.

It was therefore a great pleasure to me when Sam sent his wife and children to us to be safe out of that great visitation of plague which fell on London at that time. Some said this visitation was a punishment from God for

the dissolute ways of the King's Court; but I do not know, for I have never remarked any stroke of God falling directly on evildoers in that manner. Sam being a very shrewd sensible lad, as soon as he saw a few houses marked with that red cross upon the doors which was a sign of the plague decided it was an excellent time for his wife to visit Yorkshire; and accordingly she came with three children about her and carrying a fourth. These three, Robert and Constance and Mary, were very buxom hearty pieces, fair and sandy in complexion, with something of a London accent and perkiness about them but warm-hearted enough; it seemed they knew nothing of cows or sheep or becks or heather, and they tore up and down The Breck like wild things. To me it was a great pleasure to hear children's voices, laughing and hearty, and running footsteps, about The Breck again; John in a way liked it too, but he rather undervalued Sam's children, who indeed were not very clever at their books, though shrewd enough in life. John did not greatly care for Constance either, preferring more spirituality in a woman; but I liked her. She was good about the house, and this was a great help to me with the many ministers coming and going; she helped me ably with the poultices for John's knee; moreover, when her time came and she was delivered of her second son, she bore herself bravely, and this is a great test of the quality of a woman. It was a time of trial for both of us; for Constance had left both her husband, and her father and mother, in London, and presently we had news that her parents were dead of the plague; while for my part, both my Sam was in the danger, and also David, for as soon as he heard that the conforming minister who replaced him at St. Giles' was dead of the plague, up he came to London and stayed there, ministering to the people.

"If there is any dangerous duty anywhere, be sure your David will go stick his nose in it," grumbled John, who in truth admired his conduct greatly.

Lister at first took John's view of Constance, which vexed me, but when he found she had many stories to tell

of David's ministry in Cripplegate, he listened to her very willingly, and a kind of friendship sprang up between Sarah Lister and Constance, which I was not best pleased at but could find no reason against, and David Lister played with Sam's children. For my part I would tell Constance in return stories of Sam's childhood, and his great prowess at The Breck in the Civil War, to which she listened very attentively, while the children gathered open-mouthed about me. They were very fond of their father, which it gave me pleasure to see.

The deaths from the plague rose to three and four thousand a week in London, and Constance was in an agony for Sam, though she put a brave face on it for the children's sake; once or twice she even flew out at me about David, who, she said, was sure to go into all the stricken houses and then bring the infection back to his nephew. This was so true that I could say nothing against it, yet I had a kind of confidence in Sam, having been with him before in times of great trouble and proved his quality. I said this to Constance, and I saw she had this confidence too but feared to trust to it.

She need not have feared, however, for the plague slowly died down and Sam and David were both safe, and about Christmas time Sam came to Yorkshire to fetch his family home. I was greatly disappointed that David did not come too. Sam told me he had done his utmost to persuade his uncle, but David was very straitened in his expenses nowadays, having no regular livelihood, and though Sam would gladly have paid for him to travel, he would not accept it. Sam looked very well and hearty and prosperous, being then nigh on thirty years in age and already a respected merchant; he was not very tall, for he had not fulfilled his childish promise of height, his growth having been thwarted, I judge, during the war, but he was strong and solid in body, like his father. The children leaped about him and it was plain to see he was an indulgent father; nevertheless he had them under a good discipline.

Seeing that Sam was come, we sent to Thomas and also to Abraham, urging them to eat their Christmas dinner

with us. John sent money to Abraham to travel with, but this Abraham very courteously returned when he arrived, saying he was well able to pay for himself and would not trespass further on his father's goodness, especially since he had broken from the course his father wished for him. John sniffed and snorted somewhat over this; but was pleased enough in reality. Thomas, overhearing this, told his father that Abraham's time was not yet come, but he had great trust, from what he heard of him, that he would one day be a famous astronomer, which pleased John further.

So we had a very great Christmas dinner, with Thomas, and Sam and Constance and their three children, and Abraham, and the Baumes and their daughters—one of whom, still unmarried, I thought had an eye for Thomas—and Mrs. Hodgson and her son, who was studying for a minister. Poor Captain Hodgson could not come, he being in gaol in York with some other local parliament-men, on suspicion of a plot of which they were entirely innocent. The Hodgsons had a fancy for Abraham, they liked to say that he had caught the infection of mathematics at their house, which stood in Halifax parish, there having been, it seemed, some famous mathematicians lately born in Halifax.

A thing which gave me great pleasure then was that a letter from Virginia arrived just at Christmas-tide, when Sam and all the others were there to see it. The letter came not from Chris, however, but from his wife, whose name, it seemed, was Virginia, like her birthplace. It was a letter most delightful, being both sweet and able; very well-writ in a fine gentlewoman's hand, with good spelling and fluent expression. As far as I could gather, this Virginia seemed to be the daughter of some high-up official there; *my father opposed our marriage at the first*, wrote Jinny (for this, it seemed, was Chris's name for her); *but after Chris's notable feat against the Indians, he gladly withdrew his opposition.*

"Chris's notable feat against the Indians!" exclaimed Sam when he read this, looking at me accusingly. "You never told me aught of that, Mother."

"I never heard aught of it," said I. "Nor do I suppose I ever shall, unless I can coax it out of this Virginia."

(But I never have heard; for when I had asked four or five times of it and got no answer to my question, at last Chris wrote impatiently: *that is long ago Mother and I have forgott it*, and I gave up asking.)

Yes, it was a very sweet letter, telling how she and Chris were married nigh on two years ago, and how they now had a daughter, whom they had named Faith after my mother. This pleased me greatly.

Sam read this letter, and the others from Chris, many times very carefully, musing on them.

"I doubt not Chris is doing very well in Virginia," said he. "He is just the lad for a new wild country, though for my part I can ill spare him. He was a grand lad, our Chris. Very bright and swift and joyous, like spring sunshine."

"You are turning poet, Sam," Constance told him with one of her hearty laughs.

"Ha!" said Sam scornfully at this, snorting.

Seeing there was so much talk of marriage and children in the air, I put Sam on to urge Thomas towards matrimony, his father and I being troubled that he had yet no family.

"I cannot marry while I am about the Lord's business," said Thomas impatiently, and when he and Sam were alone together he explained that he feared a wife and children would draw him from his travelling ministry and keep him at home. Since this was largely why I desired to see him married, I could not counter it, but my heart grieved over him, because he looked so haggard and comfortless.

In the next year, indeed, there seemed some hope that the persecution might be lifted from us, for the Duke of Buckingham came into great favour with the King, and the Duke, being Lord Fairfax's son-in-law, was kindly disposed towards those of our persuasion. He seemed a strange, odd man, this Duke; the most dissolute, save perhaps the King himself, of all that dissolute Court, he yet showed some inclination towards religion, and though he neglected his wife till her heart was torn, he yet always showed much affection and

respect for her father. He kept a Non-conforming minister as his chaplain, doubtless for her sake, and when Lady Fairfax died—which I only now, with much regret, heard of—he proposed that this chaplain should publicly preach her funeral sermon. I thought this the most natural thing in the world, seeing who his wife was, but among Cavaliers, to whom Non-conforming folk were both ludicrous and treacherous, it was considered very wonderful. While the Duke was Lord-Lieutenant of Yorkshire, things were a little easier for those of our persuasion, and in this year he even had a scheme brought before Parliament, whereby the Presbyterian ministers might be comprehended in the Church of England. Thomas and David were both tremendously heartened by this scheme; they wrote very much upon it, and Thomas prayed and fasted for its good success until he wore himself almost to a shadow. But it was all of no avail; the scheme failed to pass in Parliament.

It saddened me to see the bitter disappointment on Thomas's face when he heard of this defeat. This year was the year of the Great Fire in London, when so much of the City went up in fearful flame, and Sam had to move out his goods, both from his house and from Blackwell Hall, in a hurry, and lost some by fire and some by water and some by theft, so that the damage he sustained was very heavy and he was vexed by it. But though I was sorry for his losses, my heart did not grieve over him as it did over Thomas and David. For Sam lost goods, and by exercising toil and skill and care he could replace them; but David and Thomas were kept by law from exercising toil and skill and care in the profession they had given their whole lives to, it was their spirits which were cramped and thwarted. "How long, O Lord, how long?" I murmured to myself often, sighing, as I saw the lines graving deeper every day on Thomas's face, the lines which come when a man is kept by oppression from his true fulfilment.

VII
ACHIEVEMENT

THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED

IT WAS ABOUT this time, the year after the Great Fire, that our prosperity began to return to us.

For one thing, John cleared the Holroyd Hall land at last. Whether he had bought it in himself and sent the purchase price to Chris at the time of his majority, mortgaging the land to do so, or whether he had sent the income from it to him all these years and now at last bought it from him, I do not quite remember; but whichever it was I know it was very honestly done, and Chris wrote a very grateful letter about it to John, which must have given him great content, for I found it amongst his papers after his death. *You are verry rich in reputation here as a pattern of a Father*, wrote Chris, which made a good close to the long story between John and Francis. So now John owned the Holroyd Hall land; the Hall stood empty, as before, with poor Giles's bowling alley all grown over, which saddened me, but he farmed and pastured some of the land and let out some portions, and it was profitable to him.

Then, too, John was now partner with Sam; for Mr. Bagnall dying of the plague, and then the Fire coming, Sam was very short of ready money, of which much is needed in a merchant's business, and he wrote urgently to his father, and John with great difficulty by using all his credit found him two hundred pounds, and Sam, thus tided over an awkward time, then went on and prospered mightily, and we with him.

John still held his place with Lady Maynard, and the property left him by his father was now all paying rent again. Besides, our cloth began to sell again—not as it had in the

old days before the war, but better than of late. Isaac Baume's younger daughter, despairing, as I thought, poor woman, of our Thomas, began to wish to marry a former apprentice of theirs who was now in Halifax. Her father was opposed to it at first, for the man was meanly placed, but after a great deal of talk John took him to manage our manufacture for us, at which the Baumes were greatly pleased, and the marriage was celebrated. With this man in the loom-chamber, Lister in Bradford, Sam in London, and John's great skill over all, our trade prospered. Overseas trade was still poor by reason of the Dutch, and our own English roads were so beset by highwaymen and the like, that we often lost pieces by the way or at least had to ransom them, but still on the whole the nation was settled, and trade in general improved.

As time went on I noticed a great restlessness growing upon John. He was still a governor of the school in Bradford, and very busy with that and his other work, and ministers often passed through our house and talked with him, so that although his knee prevented him from riding much and he could not go to the distant markets, he need not, I thought, feel that his life was tedious or confined. But he seemed increasingly restless and impatient, and as if our returning prosperity meant little to him. When I asked him, as I did several times, what was wrong he put me off and did not answer; but one day he broke out suddenly:

"I hear Lord Fairfax is far from well."

I was slow in understanding the true meaning of this saying, until I heard John and Baume talking together on the same matter next forenoon.

"Why, he's a young man yet," Baume was saying. "He's a long way to go to reach the three score and ten allowed by the Psalmist."

"He and I are of an age," said John, nodding.

"But it's his wounds, and his marchings in all weathers, d'you see," went on Baume earnestly. "That'll be what it is, I reckon."

Then I understood that John feared for Lord Fairfax's

life, and his restlessness sprang from a great desire to see him. To try if I was right, I said to him suddenly that evening:

"How far is it from Bradford to Nun Appleton?"

John's start told me I had struck home. "Why, not far, not far," said he. "Five and twenty miles or so as the crow flies."

"But you are not a crow, John," I said.

"I am well aware of that," replied John shortly.

No more was said at that time, but a day or two later John came in with a scroll in his hand, which when unrolled proved to be a map of the West Riding. It was a very fine map, prettily coloured, with some sheep and a shepherd at one foot and a scale to measure the miles at the other; all the rivers and bridges were clearly marked, the mountains drawn in peaks, the parklands green with little trees, and each church shown by a very delicately drawn steeple, so that it was a pleasure to look at. To see Bradford and Little Holroyd, Coley and Halifax, Leeds and Adel, York and Marston Moor, all the places which were part of my own life, writ clearly on this map gave me a strange feeling.

"There is Nun Appleton, you see, wife," said John, pointing.

After that I began to urge him to go thither. John was very eager to go; but his age was growing on him, so that he found it difficult to make decisions quickly. As oft as I urged him to it, he found objections; it was too far, he could not ride the distance, the carrier's course did not lie near it; besides, for him to pay a visit to Lord Fairfax uninvited would be presumptuous and improper. He was inflaming his rheumatics by this continual debating, so I wrote privately to Sam on the matter, and Sam replied with a very skilful letter. *I wonder you and my Mother do not pay a visit of enquiry on Lord Fairfax, wrote Sam: he is laid by the heels with rheumatism, and is glad to have his old officers visit him. He may feel you are lacking in your duty if you do not go, wrote Sam very skilfully: if it is a matter of the expense of the coach which deters you, let me stand your debtor for it.*

At this last expression John quite bounded in his chair; if Sam thought he could not pay for a visit to his own General he was much mistaken, cried my John indignantly. I curbed my smile, and said very seriously that perhaps his not going had lent colour to the foolish supposition.

"Sam seems to think I should take you with me," said John after a pause.

"Why, it would be a great pleasure to me, John," said I. This was the truth, but it was truth too that I was afraid to let him go alone. His knee sometimes swelled suddenly, and if I were not there to dress it he would suffer.

"If you accompany me, a coach will be necessary," said John.

"Yes, that is so," said I, taking the necessity for the coach upon myself, very gladly.

The only matter which now remained to be settled was whether a letter should be writ to Lord Fairfax, asking his permission to call, or no. This debate too continued for several days; John being unable to decide which would be most presumptuous, to write, which would perhaps seem to be asking for an invitation, or to present himself uninvited. I thought it would be best to drive there, put up at some neighbouring inn, and thence send a respectful message, which thus would not appear to request hospitality. But perhaps my urgency for this course drove John from it; for he wrote to Lord Fairfax and sent off the letter by a special messenger, which was very costly. He was on tenterhooks, poor man, till the answer came; but when it at last arrived nothing could have been more satisfactory, for one of Lord Fairfax's liveried men appeared at the door of The Breck to say that his master had sent a coach for us, with horses arranged for, and we were to take our time and set off when it was convenient to us—he had just left the coach, he said, put up at the Pack Horse in Bradford. John was overjoyed, and in a fever for departure.

So next forenoon early we set off driving. It was a very lovely spring day, full of clear bright sunshine; the trees and hedges were all budding, the grass very green, the birds

singing, the lambs plentiful, very young and curly; the roads were at their best, neither muddy nor dusty, and we soon reached Leeds, where we paused to change to Lord Fairfax's own horses. When we left there, as I mounted the coach I noticed several armed men, mounted, were gathered about us. The man who was helping me in saw my look of question, and told me this was an escort Lord Fairfax had sent for us, to guard against highwaymen.

"Are there highwaymen in these parts?" I asked, alarmed.

"Why, yes and no," replied the man: "There is a gang of them roaming about Yorkshire. They are joined under the leadership of one—a very daring valiant man, well-spoken and personable, with the air and carriage of a gentleman. They profess to take only from the rich, and give part of their booty to the poor. But do not be troubled, madam," he went on soothingly: "They are always very polite to ladies—and besides, they will not dare attack men belonging to Lord Fairfax."

He was very apologetic for having mentioned this matter, fearing he had frightened me, for I judge I had turned pale. But I was not frightened; only a cold trembling had seized me as he described the highwaymen's captain, for I thought:

"That is what Chris would have become, had we kept him in England."

As we went east from Leeds we came to a different kind of country from ours in the western part of the Riding. Our country is steep and rocky, with tumbling becks and much heather; but the further east you go, the lower and broader the hills, till they sink finally into a great wide plain, with slow streams and rich soil, very fertile, both in crops and pasture. The sheep here were whiter and fatter, with larger faces and longer fleeces; the cows too were fat, with very lustrous brown coats, almost red in the sunlight. I said to John that perhaps Virginia was like this, since Chris said often that it was a rich country, but John thought differently.

No highwaymen—a word which now would always make me shudder—attacked us, and we reached Tadcaster safely and got to Nun Appleton in the late afternoon.

This house was new, not yet thirty years built, a very great fine house of brick, with a very steep roof and many chimneys; it had a centrepiece with a kind of tall dome atop, and two long wings, so that the buildings formed three sides of a square. There was a very noble park, with many splendid oak-trees, and on the other side the grey ruins of the old nunnery from which it took its name, and flower-gardens bright with tulips, and very green flat meadows stretching down to the river. As we drove through the park John suddenly pointed towards one of the trees:

“Look, wife,” said he: “Those are deer.”

I had never seen deer before, and followed his finger very eagerly; they are very gentle graceful animals with light fawn coats, very velvety, and slender legs and large frightened eyes; some have little horns and some have them large and branching.

And so we arrived at the great doors of Nun Appleton, and dismounted, and walked stiffly in. I felt somewhat anxious and apprehensive, and I think John did too, though he was more used than I to fine dwelling-houses, from his travels with Lord Fairfax. A very polite young man in a serving coat came up to us, and asked us would we eat and rest first, or would we see Lord Fairfax.

“I will see my General,” said John quickly, breathing fast.

At this the young man gave him a respectful look, and said: “My father was killed at Marston Moor, sir.”

John asked him his name, and seemed to know it, and smiled and nodded, at his ease; and the young man led us into the long gallery to see Lord Fairfax. This gallery was indeed a great hall, its floor a sea of polished wood, gleaming like waves in the spring sunshine; it had great tall windows, finer even than those at Bolling Hall, and many wooden shields on the walls, painted with armorial bearings. While we were looking about us we heard a noise of wheels rolling, and turning, startled, saw Lord Fairfax.

He was sitting in his special chair, and coming gently towards us; for this chair was balanced on three wheels, and had levers and handles, so that he could propel it wherever he wanted to go, causing the wheels to turn and steering them. Black Tom looked an old man now, worn and frail, his hands being gnarled with rheumatism, his sallow face wrinkled, his lean body bowed and his dark hair grizzled, but he had still the same kind half-smile, the same beautiful dark eyes, the same look of noble magnanimity, as he had when I last saw him, in the yard of the Pack Horse eighteen years since. John sprang forward, seized his hand and kissed it and I think wept over it; Lord Fairfax put his other hand on John's shoulder and said:

"G-g-greeting, old c-c-comrade."

To think I had forgotten how he stammered! All the old days came rushing back to me, and I was much affected. Lord Fairfax smiled at me very kindly, and gave me his other hand over John's shoulder.

Well! We stayed at Nun Appleton three days. It was a time of great happiness for John, and I think not without content for Lord Fairfax. He told us of all the pursuits he followed to occupy his long leisure: his translations from the Latin and the French, his poems, his metrical versions of the Psalms, his treatises on the history of the Church, and, as a contrast, on horse-breeding. They were all very honest gentle occupations, noble and serviceable to humanity, like himself. We saw many wonders at Nun Appleton; the Naseby jewel, the lovely park with the deer, the bright flower-beds heaped up in the fashion of little forts, the wide, gently-flowing river; we saw the books and medals and coins in the house; and John saw the fine horses in the stable, though I did not go there. Indeed I tried to keep myself in the background, so as not to come between these two old friends; I liked best to see them together in the distance, deep in talk, John limping happily beside Lord Fairfax's slowly rolling chair. They went over all their old battles and hazards; they talked of Marston Moor and Naseby, gesticulating with their hands and drawing maps

in the path with John's stick, and of the New Model, and Parliament; they spoke of Prince Rupert, Lambert, Cromwell. John told me that Lord Fairfax had never taken a penny for his General's services; in his great days Parliament had granted him some lands of the Duke of Buckingham, but he had restored them, they had granted him some lands of the Royalist Earl of Derby, including the whole Isle of Man, but apart from some provision for schools and ministers, he had turned their profit over to their rightful Countess.

"It is what I should have expected of him, John," said I.

"They are few who always act as one expects of them," replied John grimly.

I sighed a little, feeling not guiltless in this way, myself.

On the last day of our stay the weather turned cold and dreary, and when Lord Fairfax came out—he rose late and dressed very slowly on account of his many ailments—he was wearing a very fine furred cloak. I saw John looking at this very particularly, and Lord Fairfax evidently saw him too, for he said:

"Art looking at my c-c-cloak, Jack?"

"I crave pardon, sir," said John hastily, as he had doubtless been used to saying to his General. "I looked because the cloth seemed like some of my own cloth, cloth from The Breck."

"Why, that may very well be," said Lord Fairfax, smiling, "seeing it was your s-s-son S-S-Sam who sent me this cloak last winter."

John flushed with pleasure, and I could not forbear telling of how Sam saved his General's boots from the soldiers when The Breck was sacked. Lord Fairfax laughed out at this, heartily, and fell into questioning us about our sons. I told him, perhaps with too great length and mournfulness, about Thomas's marred life.

"Why, Mrs. Thorpe," said he with great gentleness: "I cannot agree with you. It s-s-seems to me that he has been more active, and his m-m-ministry more f-f-fruitful perhaps, than if he had been a c-c-comfortably settled minister. The

sentiment of this nation," he went on, "which ever respecteth c-c-consistency of c-c-conduct, will surely one day be turned towards this band of honourably det-t-terminated men—more especially," he concluded, "in view of the noble behaviour of some of the ejected m-m-ministers during the P-P-Plague."

"My brother David was one of those who ministered in the Plague," I said with pride.

"'Tis what I should have expected from him," said Lord Fairfax.

Remembering what John had said of those who had acted as one expected of them, I felt some considerable pride for my brother, but naturally made no comment. Lord Fairfax was silent for a moment, then broke out suddenly, very quick and without a stammer:

"I hope that God will one day clear that cause we undertook, and the integrity of such as faithfully served Him."

"Nay," said John, "with all respect, my General, it is partly cleared now, for the King rules with a Parliament."

"Yes and no," replied Lord Fairfax thoughtfully. "He obs-s-serves the forms."

"Why, that is much," said John.

"You are not so cheerful about the cause when you are at home, John," said I, surprised.

John wagged his head, somewhat disconcerted. "Well, we have taught those who rule that they have a joint in their necks," said he.

"Nay, now you are talking like C-C-Cromwell," said Lord Fairfax, smiling sadly.

They fell to talking of Cromwell, of the Commonwealth and the bitter disappointment of the Protectorate.

"Where did we fail, Jack?" said Lord Fairfax sadly.

"Where did we stray from the true path?"

"It was not in the war," said John very staunchly.

"No, I think it was not much in the war," mused Lord Fairfax. "It was in the peace."

"Aye, it was in the peace," agreed John gruffly. "Oliver should not have had Parliament purged to his own pleasure."

"And we should not have killed the King," said Lord Fairfax.

"No," agreed John. "We should have deposed him bloodlessly."

"In favour of his eldest son," went on Lord Fairfax.

John pursed his lips and sighed, and said: "I suppose so."

Lord Fairfax went on to speak of the Restoration and the disappointments it had brought him, but I saw that he thought the crown should descend from king to prince, as a title went from man to son, and that England was best governed by a King, provided only he were a good one. John seemed to agree, but I was not so sure; Lord Fairfax told me jokingly I had very levelling ideas, and indeed it may have been so. As I grow older, all pretensions of birth and wealth seem to me very strange in the sight of God.

We should have left sooner, not wishing to outstay our welcome, but we were detained by Lord Fairfax so that we might have a glimpse of the Duchess, who was expected in the forenoon of that day. She did not come in the forenoon, however, nor by noon, nor for an hour or two after, and while this seemed natural enough to me, I could see that to Lord Fairfax it was a torment.

"Her husband d-d-delays her," he muttered.

At last it was clear that we must postpone our departure no longer if we were to reach home that night, we should be very late even as it was. We made our preparations, and the coach was ordered and came round, and Lord Fairfax rolled himself to the great doors to say farewell to us. He stretched out a hand to one of his men, who put into it a very handsome polished stick of some dark wood, banded and topped with silver; and with the help of this he rose, and stood to say farewell to us. I exclaimed and begged him to sit, but he would not, putting it aside with a smile; then he bowed over my hand as if I were a great lady, and kissed it, and said:

"God be with you, Penninah Thorpe, and bless you."

Then it was time for him to say farewell to John. I went away and sat in the coach, so that they might be alone to it; I even took care not to look in their direction.

It was long enough before John came limping out, very quick and heavy in his step; there were tears on his face and he did not speak to me. The moment before the coach moved was very painful; at last it stirred and rolled away, turning; I looked out and saw Lord Fairfax still standing, waving to us in farewell.

I did not speak to John till several miles had passed. Then I laid my hand on his and said:

"It is a very fair and pleasant place for him to finish his days in."

"Aye—but he is lonely," said John gruffly. "In three days we saw none there but servants and his chaplain. When I think of the crowds that used to throng him, making requests——" He broke off and concluded: "But I think he will not have much longer of it now."

We had passed through Tadcaster, and it was raining, when the coach jolted aside sharply to avoid another coach, a very fine grand affair with arms on the panel, drawn by six horses, with many men about it, which came galloping towards us furiously, with much mud splashing.

"It is Moll, perhaps," I exclaimed, and I leaned out of the window to see.

I was right; except that it was not so much Moll Fairfax as the Duchess of Buckingham. I caught just a glimpse of her as the coaches passed; she was dressed very fine in dark slate-coloured satin, with pearls round her throat and a crimson scarf; her sallow little face above it was crumpled in torment. I wondered to myself what her look reminded me of, and I remembered—it was my own face at Fairgap, when I used to wait for Francis and he came not. The ways of life are very wonderful, and it is strange to reflect how Lord Fairfax, who so despised his wife's love—it was the only fault I saw in him—should live to see his beloved daughter's love so despised.

The excitement, and the journey, and the eating of rich unaccustomed foods, gave John a severe attack of rheumatism, the pain spreading all about his body. However, the warm summer weather was favourable to his complaint,

and the physician and I between us cured him for that time.

John was right when he said that Lord Fairfax would not have much longer of his solitude to endure, for in the fall of that year that great and good man died.

We had a very kind letter from Moll about it. She had not been with her father at his death, she said—whereat John sighed heavily—but would tell us all she had heard from her cousin and the chaplain who attended his last hours, knowing our love to him. It seemed that his last illness, a fever, was but a short one, and his mind was not distraught by it; on the last morning of his life he called for his Bible and read the forty-second psalm. John, whose memory was slipping a little, bade me read this psalm to him. It begins very suitably and cheerfully for a dying man—*as the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?* For this seems to indicate a becoming readiness to lay down this life. But there are other passages in that psalm which have a somewhat sad aptness to Lord Fairfax's later days, as: *mine enemies reproach me; they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?*—and, most sad of all: *all Thy waves and billows are gone over me.* However, the Duchess seemed not to see this, and indeed it is true that the psalm ends on a note of faith which rings out like a trumpet. Moll told us with a touching pride of a poem which her husband had written on his father-in-law, a kind of epitaph; she enclosed a copy of the verses. At one time I knew all these verses by heart, for John would often ask me to repeat them, but my memory doth not retain the happenings of my later days as distinctly as those of earlier times, and I cannot now clearly recall them. Parts of some verses I remember, however. One ran thus:

*He never knew what envy was nor hate;
His soul was filled with worth and honesty,
And with another thing besides, quite out of date,
Call'd modesty.*

And another thus:

. . . *he understood*
How much it is a meaner thing
To be unjustly great than honourably good.

Both these hit off the noble nature of Lord Fairfax with such singular aptness that I marvel how a wicked dissolute rake like the Duke of Buckingham could have written them. But perhaps it is the highest kind of tribute to Lord Fairfax, that his goodness showed clear even to such a man as the Duke of Buckingham.

The Duchess told us, too, of the great funeral which was given her father, his tenants, and the people of the countryside, walking many miles to show their respect to him. John was grieved, I could see, not to be present at this funeral, but indeed he was not fit for it. Lord Fairfax was buried by the side of his wife, said Moll, in the choir on the south side of Bilbrough Church, Bilbrough being a small place about halfway between Nun Appleton and Marston Moor. He was to have a very handsome tomb, wrote Moll, but with only a plain inscription concerning himself, such as he would have wished.

John snorted at this. "Doubtless the King would not be pleased if the inscription told of the General's prowess with the Parliament's forces," said he sardonically.

At the foot of the grave, however, went on Moll, there was to be engraved that beautiful text from Proverbs: *The memory of the just is blessed.*

"It is true of him," said John soberly when I read this to him: "It is utterly true. *The memory of the just is blessed.* Aye. It is a very proper text for the grave of Thomas Fairfax."

He mused on it often, and always with great content, in his remaining days of life.

OUR HOUSE HAS A NEW NAME

AFTER LORD FAIRFAX'S death my John began to fail.

By the turn of the year he seemed so ill and worn that I sent word to Thomas it was his duty to give up his ministry for a while, and come home to stay with his father. The Conventicle Acts were still enforced, but the Five-Mile Act, I thought, had fallen a little in abeyance; in any case the risk must be taken; I did not want John to die feeling lonely, for it was plain he had grieved over this very much in the case of Lord Fairfax. Joseph Lister was most good and kind in sitting by his old master and keeping him company, but he talked too much of his own two sons, David and his newborn babe—not yet baptised, there being some debate between Lister and Sarah over the name—and confused John with his many stories of them, and how they were both to be ministers if the Lord would accept them. John was apt to confuse them with his own children, and be perplexed over them; and I wished him to have his own kin about him.

Thomas, then as always firm in the execution of his duty, came home directly and stayed with us without any grumbling, attending very cheerfully and assiduously upon his father. I was truly thankful for his coming, and that for more than one reason; I was somewhat over-toiled with night-watching, and with lifting John, who was always a heavy man, and with grief too, and in all these matters Thomas was a great stay and support to me. Thomas was indeed always a good son, very thoughtful and understanding. He was very urgent with me then to have a woman in from Little Holroyd to share my labours. Naturally I would not do so, but it was very sweet to be urged thus anxiously. Thomas pressed me:

"You must care for your own health, Mother," he said.

"Why, son," said I: "What is health for except to use it? Your father needs me—it is me he needs; we have lived all our life together; no-one else will do."

And indeed it was so; during the long weary nights, when John's strength left him and his mind wandered, he would speak of one thing and another from the past, which no-one living could have understood except myself, unless perhaps it were Joseph Lister. He would speak of his father and mother, of the looms they had in those days, of his Uncle Giles and of Francis; he would speak of me—not as I was then, his wife of many years at his bedside, but as a girl and even a child; once he murmured, which indeed almost forced from me the tears I was firm not to shed since they distressed him: "Thou hast a very gentle heart, Penninah." All the passages of his life he lived through; our marriage, and the birth of our children, and his meeting with Sir Thomas Fairfax, and his battles. Sometimes he would almost spring from his bed in his fever, waving his arm which he thought had a sword at the end of it; once a look of such fearful horror crossed his face that I trembled, wondering what memory it could be that so oppressed him. Then he would stir and wake, and be himself again, and know me; and then he would talk wearily, over and over, of the ruin of the good old cause, and all his life's effort wasted in it.

"But it is not ruined, John," I protested, over and over again. "Didst thou not say so thyself to Lord Fairfax, at Nun Appleton?"

"I said it to cheer him," said John wearily.

"But it is true," said I. "See how the King rules steadily with a Parliament."

"Aye," said John in a hopeless tone: "But he does what he likes with it. And consider our Thomas. Wasted, wasted," he repeated, rolling his head from side to side. "I have done nothing, nothing."

I took much thought how I might combat this dejection in him, and asked Thomas whether there were not some

hopeful happening in politics or religion I could tell his father.

"Why, yes," said Thomas. "I think there soon may be."

He began to tell me of some religious indulgence toward, which men were talking of, some Declaration or something of that kind. But it was not clear enough to pierce into John's tired mind, so I had to think of something for myself to cheer him. After long thought, and much prayer before God, I could yet put nothing in readiness; but suddenly one midnight, when we lay awake together looking at the flickering candle—for John could not bear the darkness—and he was lamenting, as usual, his lost cause and his wasted effort, words were given to me.

"Why, love," said I in a sudden cheerful tone: "Thou hast writ on the page of history that Yorkshire is staunch in defence of freedom. Is that nothing? I do not think it is nothing!"

At this John smiled a little, and told me I had a woman's mind and a woman's notions; men did not think like that, he said. But he seemed more content all the same, and even slept for a while quietly, with no delusions; and after that I always said this to him when he mourned, and I trust and hope he came to accept the truth of it.

And then by God's great mercy there came that event which enabled him to die happy. I was so busy in nursing him at the time that I did not give much attention to what Thomas said of it, and Thomas on his side wished not to awake expectations which might be disappointed; and so the thing came as an overwhelming surprise and delight to me.

One afternoon Thomas came to the door of John's sick-room, and beckoned me. John was drowsing, so I left him, but when Thomas made to take me away downstairs, I resisted him.

"I cannot leave your father long, Thomas," said I, whispering.

"Then come in here," whispered Thomas, drawing me into the loom-chamber. He shut the doors carefully, so that

the sound of the shuttle should not come to John's ears—though indeed that was a sound soothing to him—and put into my hand a paper. His hand trembled, and he was pale.

"I did not tell you before, Mother," he said, "lest it might not be granted. And you must not count too much on it; the struggle is not over, this is only a lull in the storm. But yet it is a great step forward too," he added, smiling joyously. "A great step forward. Read the paper."

So I held it away from me, my eyes being grown to need distances of late, and read it.

CHARLES R it was headed in very large letters, with a great deal about the King's titles, and being addressed to mayors and constables and ministers and so on, as is customary in public documents.

"It is some proclamation, then," I said, disappointed.

"Read it, Mother, read it," said Thomas feverishly. "Begin here."

I followed his pointing finger, and read aloud:

"We do hereby permit and license THOMAS THORPE, of the PRESBYTERIAN persuasion, to be a teacher of the congregation allowed by us in a room or rooms in his own house HOLROYD HALL, in the parish of BRADFORD in the county of YORK, for the use of such as do not conform to the Church of England, who are of the persuasion called PRESBYTERIAN, with further license and permission to him, the said THOMAS THORPE, to teach in any place licensed and allowed by us, according to our Declaration.

*Given at our Court at Whitehall, the 20th Day of April, in the twenty-fourth year of Our reign, 1672.
THORPE, a teacher."*

"It means that I am allowed to preach in any licensed meeting-place not a church, and to hold services here," explained Thomas eagerly, reading over my shoulder. "Uncle David will be licensed too, Mother."

"Oh, Thomas, Thomas!" I cried from a full heart, throwing my arms about him. "What this will mean to

your father! But why do you plan to hold the meetings at Holroyd Hall?" I asked, when our first transports of joy were over.

Thomas frowned a little, as if not understanding. Then his brow cleared.

"Why, Mother," he said, speaking very carefully and gently, as one does to children and old people: "This is Holroyd Hall nowadays, you know. Nobody has called the old house Holroyd Hall, for many a long year now. The ministers all speak of this as the hall at Little Holroyd; Holroyd Hall."

"Well," I said doubtfully: "How your father will like of that, Thomas, I do not know. You must be careful how you explain it to him."

But John seemed to take the matter very simply, and even be glad of it. He was deeply happy when the licence was shown to him; he lay quite still for a long time in silence, holding it.

"It puts you out of the Church, Thomas," he said at length.

"Why, yes, Father," agreed Thomas in his clear firm tones. "But it giveth us leave to practise our own religion, lawfully and honourably, and the Church of England to practise theirs. It will not last, I fear," he added hastily. "As I said now to my Mother, it is but a lull in the storm. But to have the concession once is a great step forward."

"Aye—it is a precedent," said John, quite in his old strong way, nodding. "Well, son. And so you propose to hold a meeting at The Breck?"

"With your permission, Father, yes," said Thomas. "I could wish to marry and settle here, and perhaps build on a little to the house."

I was greatly afraid that all these plans would confuse and perplex John, but on the contrary he seemed to understand them clearly and enjoy them.

"Marry? I wish you would marry before I go, Thomas," said John.

"Why, Father, there is plenty of time," began Thomas.

"I wish you would marry now, Thomas," urged his father wistfully. "It would be a great comfort to me, it would indeed. If you have thought seriously of any young woman, I wish you would marry before I go."

"To speak truth, Father," said Thomas, colouring: "I have loved a woman these several years, but thought it not right to marry while I was necessitated to wander."

"You loved her when the Act of Uniformity was first published," said I, laughing. "Confess now, Thomas."

"It is true," said Thomas, colouring deeper. "But how did you guess it, Mother?"

"When Chris wrote of his *moredge*," said I: "I knew you were in love by the way you spoke of that."

"I have not spoken of it to her or to her father," said Thomas hurriedly. "Her name is Faith, Mother, as it chances; that should please you."

It seemed she was the daughter of a very godly ejected minister whom we knew well, from Pudsey, and, John improving wonderfully on all this good news and continually begging Thomas to marry, and Faith being willing, the matter was arranged.

Faith is a somewhat small, fair, fragile-looking woman, "nesh" as we say in Yorkshire, not very skilled in house-keeping and not very young either, but very strong spiritually and of a most delicate and scrupulous and gentle kindness. If I know anything of women, she loved Thomas most devotedly during all those years when he, foolish as men are in these matters, thought himself bound in honour not to ask for her, since he was committed to a dangerous and in some sense unlawful task; I believe their marriage will be greatly blessed, especially now that the Lord hath granted them the joy of children.

After the marriage, when Faith had come to live here, a service was held in our house at which John was present. He sat by the hearth wrapped in coverlets, drowsing a little from time to time, but understanding well what was happening and its significance in the long struggle for English freedom. Thomas preached on the text: *They that sow in tears*

shall reap in joy, giving us a most fine, apt and moving sermon.

That very night John fell ill again. He was perhaps over-excited by the occasion; or perhaps, with the great number of people coming and going—for the house was packed to overflowing with the congregation, some standing even in the porch and outside the windows—some breeze from without chilled him; I know not. But the night was terrible; he wandered and wandered, seeming lost and seeking me, and knowing me not. The physician, whom we called early in the morning, said he had a high fever, and could not live for long.

I bethought me, and bade Thomas send for Captain Hodgson, and Isaac Baume, and Lister, for I thought John would like to bid farewell to them. They came quickly, and John saw Hodgson and Baume very gladly, for with the morning light he was himself again; and they left, much moved, taking my hand and looking into my eyes and shaking their heads, but not able to say much. But Lister seemed very uneasy, and would not go in with them, and hung about till they had gone. Then as I was returning to John's chamber Lister drew me aside, and would have me go downstairs with him, and then still seemed dissatisfied, looking about over his shoulder; finally he drew me outdoors with him till we were out of earshot of the house.

"Mistress," he said: "I have a word to say to thee. I feel I cannot see my master die without asking his and thy forgiveness."

I looked at him, astonished.

"It was I who told Mester John," wailed Lister suddenly. "I told him—I told him. That night in the war when he came home, and went out again swiftly down to Bradford. The night before the first siege. In the laithe. I told him."

I cast my mind back, striving to remember the time he meant, and I recalled how, a day or so after I had yielded to Francis, John had come home and gone again swiftly down to Bradford. I recalled, too, that he had seemed to be long between leaving the house and riding down the lane. Nor was I in any doubt as to what Lister had told him.

"Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord," wailed Lister. "I should have left it in the Lord's hands; I should not have told him."

"Tell me, Lister," said I suddenly: "When you killed Francis Ferrand, did you know him?"

"I do not know!" wailed Lister, wringing his hands. "I do not know whether I knew him or not! I believe I knew him not, save as an enemy of the Lord; but I always hated him, so perhaps I took that chance to kill him. I do not know! Can you not see that I do not know? It is a continual torment to me. I have never borne arms or lifted my hand against any man since that day, Mistress, lest I should diminish the cause of God by an unworthy instrument."

He looked at me with so much anguish contorting his plain freckled face that I perceived he spoke the truth, and that the doubt of his own intention in killing Francis had indeed been a lifelong torment to him. So, having fetched a deep breath and sighed, I said:

"Lister, I forgive thee freely, as my husband hath forgiven me. But do not speak of this openly to him," I added hastily, "for he could not bear it; or to any other person. Let it be a bond between me and thee."

"It shall be so," said Lister firmly. "God do so to me, and more also, if ever I break this bond and bring suffering on the innocent. I will name my young son Accepted, to signify my hope that my repentance is accepted of God."

At this I could not but smile a little, but I said nothing; I took him by the hand and we went back to the house and into John's room, together.

When Lister saw John lying so deep in his pillows, so pale and panting, he was very greatly moved, and said in a low sobbing tone:

"If there has been aught wrong between us, Mester, forgive me."

"There is naught to forgive," whispered John, looking steadily at him. "Thou hast been a good and faithful servant."

Then Lister broke into tears and ran from us.

I sat down beside John, and said to him sadly:

"I am truly sorry, John, that thou canst not say the same to me."

"Nay, but I do say it, Penninah!" said John, raising himself and speaking strongly. "I do say it. Thou hast been a good and faithful wife to me, the wife of my heart."

Then I bent down to him, and speaking very softly in his ear words for him alone, I told him what like of a husband he had been to me. And so we kissed, and for this life parted; for he fell into a drowse shortly after, and was never truly himself again in this world.

On the following day, it being Whitsunday, very early in the morning he died. He had a good passing, sober, honest and godly, as he would have wished; for he died a man who had always been true to himself; with his work done; in his own house, which had been honoured by acceptance in the service of his cause; with his wife at his side, and his eldest son at the foot of his bed to pray for him. *Meruisti*; thou hast deserved well, my husband. It is such as thee who bear the burdens.

PENNINAH REMEMBERS

AND SO I sit here, in the latter part of my age, at the door of my son's house—which he has built new, very fine and fair—and think on all these things, while my grandchildren play about my knee. And this I say: Take courage. I have known trials so bitter that my whole course seemed darkened. But I have known joys too; putting one with another, I have found life too good to miss; I am glad to have been born. Again: I have lived in times so troubled that I cannot think this nation has ever seen the like, or will ever see the like again. But the land has not perished; the sun shines, the rain falls, the sheep still feed on the Pennine hills; women still conceive and bring forth and give their children suck; and while man lives, the hope of righteousness will not die. The strife is sore while it lasts; yes, it is very sharp and bitter, and wearying to the spirit, for it seems as if it will never come to any end; but if we keep a good heart and cease not to care for justice and truth, some day the storm will pass, and the nations rejoice in the sweet air of peace.